Transportation
Land Development
Environmental
Services

Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Six Bedford Farms Drive, Suite 607
Bedford, New Hampshire 03110-6532
Telephone 603 644-0888
Fax 603 644-2385
www.vhb.com

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Chris Cross, ATF Chair
Tom Fargo, SRPC
Sandra Keans, SRPC
Cynthia Copeland, SRPC
Cliff Sinnott, RPC
David Walker, RPC
Beverly Hollingworth, State Executive Council
Gary Kassof, USCG
Steve Bird, City of Dover
John Pelletier, 94 Back River Road
Jack Pare, Newington
Gail Pare, Newington
Deborah Finnigan, Portsmouth
Bill O'Donnell, FHWA
Marc Laurin, NHDOT
Mike Dugas, NHDOT
Chris Waszczuk, NHDOT
Pete Walker, VHB
Frank O'Callaghan, VHB

Date/Time: July 26, 2007 - 6:30 PM

DRAFT

Project No.: NHS-027-1(37)/11238
VHB: 51425.00

Place: Newington Town Hall

Re: Newington-Dover
ATF Mtg # 17

Notes taken by: Frank O'Callaghan
Peter Walker

INTRODUCTION

Chris Cross called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM. He welcomed all, noting they were attending the 17^{h} Advisory Task Force (ATF) meeting. After each member of the ATF introduced themselves, Chris reviewed the role and responsibilities of the ATF: 1) to act as a liaison to the project team; 2) serve as a conduit for public input; and 3) to disseminate project-related information back to their respective constituencies. He noted that notes on ATF activities and meetings are available through the project website (www.newington-dover.com) and that a public hearing on the project was held in September 2006. Chris welcomed public comment explaining that the EIS process is interactive involving refinements of plan development through the ATF and public informational process. He stated that despite the recent news and public discussion concerning constrained funding sources for statewide transportation system and infrastructure improvements, the Newington-Dover Spaulding Turnpike improvements are still needed and warranted. He also recognized Executive Councilor Beverly Hollingworth.

Chris Cross asked for comments or edits to the draft meeting minutes from the previous meeting (January 18, 2006). Tom Fargo made a motion to accept the minutes as drafted; Sandra Keans seconded. There being no comments or edits, the draft meeting minutes of January 18, 2006 were unanimously adopted.

Chris then asked the ATF to identify any specific comments to bring forward from the various towns, commissions, and organizations represented on the ATF. Cynthia Copeland asked whether the proposed mitigation projects would be discussed. Chris Waszczuk stated that mitigation would indeed be addressed as part of the meeting.

Chris Cross then turned the meeting over to Chris Waszczuk, Chief Project Manager for the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT). Chris began his presentation by providing an overview of the agenda for the evening's meeting. (Note: a copy of the slide presentation is attached to these notes). Chris stated that he would review the comments received at the Public Hearing and on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), with the Department's formal responses to each issue. Chris explained that the Department had finalized the formal "Report of the Commissioner" on June 25, 2007. Copies of the Report were distributed to members of the ATF and the audience. (See attached.) He also noted that he would review the updated cost estimates for the project.

PROJECT FUNDING STATUS

Chris Waszczuk began by noting rumors to the effect that the project has been eliminated from the Department's Ten-Year Plan, stating that, while the project's status in the Ten-Year Plan has changed, the project has not been eliminated. The first cut draft of the Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TYP) for 2009-2018 that was presented to Governor's Advisory Committee on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) on July 18th proposes to change the project's funding from the Federal Program to the Turnpike Capital Program. Chris briefly reviewed the process used by GACIT to develop the TYP. A draft TYP is updated biennially and was recently submitted to GACIT by NHDOT Commissioner O'Leary at a July 18 meeting. The Spaulding Turnpike Improvement Project is proposed to be moved from the federal program (*i.e.*, project which are funded with an 80:20 split between federal and state funds) to the Turnpike program. This change was made with the recognition that there will need to be additional funding in the Turnpike Program to fund the project's final design, ROW procurement, and construction. Chris noted that he has been directed by the Assistant Commissioner to move forward with the project at least through the FEIS stage and secure the permitting and layout approval necessary to advance the project forward. The Department recognizes that a great deal of time and energy have been spent on developing the best alternative. However, there is a very serious funding crisis brought on by the recent rate of inflation (approximately 45% increase over the last 3 years) for construction materials such as steel and asphalt. The funding of transportation projects is a major issue and will need to be resolved at the state level with the Governor and Legislature.

Chris stated that there will be several meetings around the state with the GACIT over the next several months, and encouraged members of the ATF and the audience to attend. The GACIT is due to issue its report on the TYP to the Governor in December. Then the Governor will submit the plan to the Legislature. Until that happens, the existing TYP will remain in force.

Chris handed out a listing of the projects that was presented by the Commissioner to the GACIT on July 18 (i.e., draft TYP). The Commissioner has presented the reality of the situation: Only $2 billion in revenue is available, with $4 billion in projects on the books. The Commissioner has said that it will take closer to 35 years to complete all of the current projects unless either revenue is increased or projects cut. This is a very serious issue that should not be taken lightly.

With regard to the Newington-Dover Spaulding Turnpike Improvements, Chris stated that a meeting has been scheduled with the Special Committee to formally act on the necessity of the project and to approve the layout on August 22, 2007 at 2:00 PM at the NHDOT Offices in Concord. He noted that while approximately $32M was earmarked for design and construction, the Turnpike program will need additional revenue to support the Newington-Dover project and other Turnpike improvement projects. He stated that continued project development is warranted since the project is much needed from a safety and congestion standpoint.

Chris then reviewed the updated project schedule noting that the FEIS is targeted to be published in October 2007, the Record of Decision (ROD) is expected in January 2008, with both final design (July 2008 – June 2012) and construction (Spring 2010 – Fall 2010) funding dependent.

Chris asked if there were questions about the project status. Cynthia Copeland asked if earmarked money is a higher priority. Chris responded that the Draft Plan has no high priority project designations.

Cliff Sinnott noted that the Rochester Spaulding Turnpike project was also moved to the Turnpike Program. He inquired as to other projects which might have been moved and if there is any sense of priorities among the listed projects? Chris responded that the plan identifies four projects in the Turnpike Program that are already funded. There are about a dozen other projects listed under the Turnpike Program that will need additional funding (approximately $500M), including the Newington-Dover project.

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

Chris Waszczuk provided a summary of the public comments received at the hearing and in subsequent written correspondence. A total of 73 individuals or agencies provided comment. Thirty of these comments were from concerned citizens, the largest category of respondent. Twenty-seven respondents supported the project, while five comments were received in opposition to the project. (See the attached slide presentation for more data on the breakdown and types of comments received.)

Chris then turned his presentation to a discussion of the main comments and issues that were related to the proposed layout. During his presentation, Chris paraphrased from the Report of the Commissioner, (ROTC) which is attached to these notes. He distributed copies of the ROTC to attendees. Tom Fargo asked if the ROTC is also available on the project website. Chris responded that it is posted on the website.

Issues Potentially Affecting the Roadway Layout

Issue 1: Concern with Scale of Proposed Improvements, Adverse Effects of Eight Lanes

Several comments were received on the fact that the preferred alternative, as presented at the Public Hearing, proposes a total of eight lanes. Although there was a great deal of support for the project overall, some of those commenting expressed concern over the scale of the project and on the character of the potential impact to Dover Point; they requested assurances that the number of lanes and width of shoulders were warranted.

Chris paraphrased from the Report of the Commissioner in response to this concern. Among the main points contained in the ROTC:

- The Draft EIS evaluated a number of different 6-lane alternatives and documented that a 6-lane alternative, even when considered in combination with all other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation System Management (TSM) measures, would not be sufficient to meet projected 2025 travel demands. A 6-lane bridge would reach capacity by 2017.

- The cross-section of a 6-lane alternative is nearly as wide as the proposed 8-lane alternative. The reduction of environmental impact resulting from a 6-lane would be relatively small – typically on the order of about 5% less – in comparison to the 8-lane alternative.

- Right-of-way impacts would be relatively the same for either a six-lane alternative or an eight-lane alternative. Two (2) businesses in Dover and similar strip land acquisitions would need to be acquired as a result of either alternative.

- The Preferred Alternative provides three basic travel lanes and one auxiliary lane in each direction between Exits 3 and 6. The auxiliary lanes allow traffic to safely enter, exit and change lanes. The 10 to 12 foot shoulders are a safety improvement and are needed to allow vehicles to safely pull over in emergency situations and stop outside the travel lanes. Narrow shoulder areas are not deemed as being safe areas to stop due to their confining width and the relatively high travel speeds along the Turnpike.

Chris then asked the ATF for questions or comments on this issue.

Cliff Sinnott asked whether or not the redesign of Exit 4 would eliminate the need for the fourth lane in each direction, stating that he thought the need for the additional lanes was related primarily to the weave conditions created by the Exit, rather than traffic volumes. Frank O'Callaghan responded that the need for four lanes in each direction was related to the total volume of traffic entering, exiting and traveling on the Turnpike between Exits 3 and 6. He added that the redesign of Exit 4 as shown in the Preferred Alternative did not eliminate the weaving of traffic; it made the weaving safer and more efficient.

Tom Fargo asked whether NHDOT is counting traffic currently and if NHDOT had reviewed the traffic projections made in the Draft EIS against those actual counts. Chris Waszczuk responded that a permanent counter exists at both the toll booths and on the bridge. According to these counting stations, the growth in traffic has been slowing, and has been relatively flat over the last few years. The projections in the Draft EIS assume a 1.3% growth rate, which is less than the historic traffic growth that has occurred in the area. So the modeling has recognized that growth is slowing, but that traffic growth will still occur. Tom also stated that numerous major development projects are in the works – e.g., the Flatley Company is building a mall in Rochester and Liberty Mutual is moving about 1200 jobs from the Pease Tradeport to Dover. Frank O'Callaghan added that as the peak hour growth of traffic diminishes, the duration of peak hour traffic expands. He also stated that those major changes in land use such as Pease, Liberty Mutual, *etc.*, were built into the model.

Issue 2: Concern with Proposed Re-Configuration of Exit 6 and Added Traffic Signals

Some comments received expressed opposition to the proposed modification of the Exit 6W ramp from the existing free-flow loop to a diamond configuration under signal control. These individuals felt that the signal would operate inefficiently, resulting in congestion, traffic queues on the Turnpike and Dover Point Road, and increased traffic diversion onto City streets (*e.g.*, Spur Road, Boston Harbor Road).

In response to this concern, Chris paraphrased from the ROTC, stating that the signalized diamond interchange configuration proposed for Exit 6, as part of the Preferred Alternative, provides a safer

and more efficient traffic operation in comparison to a free-flowing 2-lane loop ramp alternative for northbound traffic desiring to travel west on US 4. He noted that other interchange configurations were studied and found to be less desirable. The single lane loop ramp cannot accommodate 2025 travel demands. A 2-lane loop ramp is not recommended due to safety considerations. Such a design would also result in additional wetland impacts and impact a number of Homestead Lane residences. Not only is the 2-lane loop ramp alternative a safety concern, it is also unnecessary and would cost approximately $2 million more to construct (primarily due to the increased span and width of the new bridge carrying US 4 over the Turnpike) than the signalized diamond interchange configuration (exclusive of right-of-way and mitigation costs).

Chris elaborated on the Department's response to concerns about potential traffic backups on the northbound off-ramp at Exit 6. As summarized in the Draft EIS, the proposed storage lengths on the northbound off-ramp will sufficiently accommodate the anticipated queues without vehicles backing up onto the Turnpike.

All three signalized intersections in the Exit 6 area are projected to operate at Level of Service (LOS) B or better during the 2025 weekday morning and evening peak hours, with the exception of the northbound ramps which will operate at LOS C. These anticipated levels of operation meet or exceed the Department's desired standard of LOS for new roadway facilities. With the facility operating at high levels of service with modest delays, motorists will have no reason to seek alternative routes. [This is more fully documented in Chapter 4 of the DEIS.]

Chris asked if there were questions on this issue or the Department's response. There were none.

Issue 3: Mixed Support for Elimination of Exit 5

A group of residents of Wentworth Terrace had expressed their support for the proposed elimination of Exit 5, but requested modification of Wentworth Terrace to create a loop at the end of this dead end street to facilitate movement of cars and trucks using the road. However, other comments were received in opposition to the closure of Exit 5, citing concerns about access to Hilton Park and increased traffic on Dover Point Road. One proposed modification to the Preferred Alternative suggested that the portion of Hilton Drive extending north from the existing ramps to the pump station be retained to create a loop road.

In response to these comments, Chris explained that the closure of Exit 5 is necessitated from a safety and traffic operations standpoint due to its proximity to Exit 6 and the projected increase in traffic (2025 travel demand) along the Turnpike between Exits 3 and 6. Insufficient distance (approximately 2,000 feet) exists between the on-ramp from Exit 5 and the off-ramp to Exit 6. Traffic safety and efficiency aside, reconstructing Exit 5 to minimum design standards would severely impact Hilton Park and the Wentworth Terrace neighborhood, and would preclude the opportunity to construct sound walls to reduce the existing and future traffic noise levels in the neighborhood that the Preferred Alternative provides.

Chris added that the potential traffic diversions to Hilton Drive, Dover Point Road and Boston Harbor Road resulting from the closure of Exit 5 have been analyzed. A portion of the existing eastbound traffic on US 4 that seeks to travel north on the Turnpike, and currently enters and exits Hilton Park and Wentworth Terrace *via* Exit 5, would be re-routed to Exit 6 and Dover Point Road. The overall re-distribution of traffic associated with the Preferred Alternative is anticipated to result in a modest increase in traffic along Dover Point Road in the vicinity of Boston Harbor Road. A detailed capacity analysis conducted for the intersection of Boston Harbor Road/Dover Point Road and the proposed local connector road shows LOS A operations throughout the year 2025.

Relative to commercial vehicles accessing and exiting the Wentworth Terrace neighborhood and Hilton Drive, Chris reviewed a plan of the proposed improvements to Hilton Drive in the vicinity of Wentworth Terrace and Hilton Park, stating that the roadway will be designed to accommodate tractor-trailer trucks. Also, as suggested, a portion of Hilton Drive extending north from the existing ramps to the pump station is proposed to be retained to create a loop road for trucks to more easily exit the neighborhood. Chris then asked for questions from the ATF.

Bill O'Donnell asked whether the elimination of Exit 5 would affect the configuration of the noise barrier planned for that location. Chris referred to a slide of the plan for that area, which indicated that there is no effect on the barrier. Following this clarification, there were no further comments or questions from the ATF or those in attendance.

Issue 4: Request for Sidewalks on Dover Point Road and Other Pedestrian and Bicyclist Accommodations in Dover

Several parties that either testified at the Public Hearing and/or submitted written comments requested the inclusion of sidewalks in several areas in Dover. Chris referred to a revised plan of Dover Point Road. The revised plan included a sidewalk on the west side connecting Hilton Park to the existing sidewalk on Boston Harbor Road; the Department intends to include these sidewalks in the project if several conditions can be met: 1) landowner easements can be obtained; 2) wetlands regulators permit a slight increase in impacts to wetlands; 3) the City of Dover agrees to maintain the sidewalks once constructed. As has become standard procedure over recent years, the Department will ask the City to execute a maintenance agreement prior to constructing the sidewalks.

Chris also noted that a sidewalk is proposed to be constructed alongside the proposed connector road connecting Spur Road with Boston Harbor Road. Lighting is proposed to be installed as part of the proposed underpass structure beneath US 4. New sidewalks are also proposed in the following locations: along the north side of Spur Road between the Bayview Park parking area and the Scammell Bridge; along the west side of the connector road between Spur Road and Boston Harbor Road; along the new two-way connector beneath the Little Bay Bridges; and along Hilton Drive. No other sidewalks are proposed in Dover as part of the project.

As part of the project, the Department proposes to build 4-foot wide shoulder areas, which will accommodate bicycles, along the reconstructed segments of Dover Point Road, US 4, Spur Road, Hilton Drive, and the two connector roadways.

Tom Fargo asked whether, with the sidewalks and shoulders as planned, a pedestrian could walk a loop around Hilton Park, across the Exit 6 area to Dover Point Road and back to Hilton Park. Chris Waszczuk responded that it would be possible, but noted that there would only be a 4-foot shoulder on the Exit 6 bridge, not a full sidewalk.

Issue 5: Request for Pedestrian and Bicyclists in Newington.

Comments were received which requested better accommodation for bicyclists and pedestrians in Newington. It was specifically requested that the re-design of Exit 3 provide for safe and convenient pedestrian and bicyclist crossing of the Turnpike. In addition, sidewalks were requested to be constructed on both side of Woodbury Avenue north of Fox Run Road. Chris Waszczuk pointed out that, under the Preferred Alternative as proposed at the hearing, the reconstruction of Woodbury Avenue would include a seven (7) foot wide curbed panel, adjacent to the roadway, to accommodate both a future sidewalk and utilities. The Department considered the request for construction of sidewalks and, similar to the sidewalks in Dover, if the Town of Newington agrees to accept maintenance responsibilities for the new sidewalks, the Department will construct new sidewalks on both sides of Woodbury Avenue within the limits of the reconstruction project. Also, a new sidewalk

would be provided on the north side of the bridge crossing over the Turnpike and extending through the new Woodbury Avenue/Arboretum Drive/Exit 3 southbound ramps intersection. The sidewalk would then continue along the west side of Arboretum Drive to the first driveway, which is located at approximately Station 4055 of Arboretum Drive. Roadside shoulder areas (4 to 5 feet wide) to accommodate bicyclists are proposed within the limits of the project along Woodbury Avenue, the bridge over the Turnpike within the Exit 3 interchange area, and along the reconstructed sections of Arboretum Drive.

Chris then asked for comments from the ATF or public.

Gail Pare asked: "If you designate [sidewalks] as something other than a sidewalk, is it more accessible to bikes?" Chris Waszczuk responded that bicyclists would use a 4-foot shoulder adjacent to the raised sidewalk. It is generally unsafe for bicyclists to ride on a sidewalk unless the path is specifically designed to accommodate joint use. A discussion followed which considered the advantages and disadvantages of allowing bicyclists on sidewalks vs. requiring them to use the shoulder area. Tom Morgan offered that Newington has no local ordinance to prevent bicyclists from using the sidewalk.

Tom Morgan then asked about access for a pedestrian walking north to Arboretum Drive from the proposed ramp intersection. Chris Waszczuk reiterated that a sidewalk would connect the Woodbury Avenue area across the Turnpike to Arboretum Drive and along the improved section of Arboretum. In other places along Arboretum Drive, pedestrians would be able to walk in the existing shoulder area on a relatively low volume roadway. Tom Morgan said that he was surprised to hear that the state requires local maintenance of sidewalks adjacent to state roads. Chris replied that the Department simply does not have the resources to maintain local sidewalks. Tom Morgan asked: "In how many communities does NHDOT have this type of arrangement?" Chris did not have the exact number, but stated that there were numerous such agreements throughout the state. The responsibilities for maintenance of sidewalks were recently clarified in a court case involving the town of Tilton. He also noted that the Transportation Enhancement funding program requires local sidewalk maintenance. Chris Cross added that the Woodbury Avenue sidewalk adjacent to the Malls is not maintained by NHDOT. In summary, NHDOT will require the maintenance agreement, or the sidewalk will not be built.

Issue 6: Concern with Re-configured Access to the Exxon-Mobil Station on Nimble Hill Road

A representative of Cumberland Farms expressed concern that the Exxon-Mobil station at Nimble Hill Road would suffer negative impacts because the proposed project would eliminate its direct access to the Turnpike. The representative acknowledged that direct access from the Turnpike off-ramp would not be possible in light of the proposed raised median that will be constructed on the exit ramp, and that the proposed connector road and driveway to be constructed behind the business seek to mitigate the negative effect on the business. The owner of the facility has requested (through his attorney) that a direct access be provided from the site to the Turnpike on-ramp, noting that this access would involve minimal changes, have good sight lines, and the conflicting traffic approaching the on-ramp would be under signal control at the Shattuck Way intersection.

In response to this concern, Chris referred to the proposed plan and stated that NHDOT has reviewed the request and is amenable to maintain the existing driveways that service the property. The present driveway on Nimble Hill Road will not have direct access from the Turnpike off-ramp, as a raised median is proposed to be constructed as part of the project. The driveway would have access to the on-ramp leading to the Turnpike but would be restricted to right turns in and out from the on-ramp. The second driveway from the Exxon Station that presently has access directly to the Turnpike will be connected to a new local connector roadway that will be constructed south of the gas station and intersect Nimble Hill Road opposite Shattuck Way. Chris noted that the intersection of Nimble Hill

Road and Shattuck Way is not proposed to be signalized as part of the project. Conduit for future traffic signals had been installed at the intersection, as part of the interim safety improvement project at Exit 4, with the intent that traffic signals would be installed if traffic increases in the area to the extent that the appropriate signal warrants are met.

Cynthia Copeland asked for clarification of how the new access to the gas station would work. Chris stated that left-turns entering or exiting would be prohibited and that the geometry of the proposed alternative would be an improvement to the existing condition. The on-ramp to the Turnpike would be extended by approximately 150 feet to join the Turnpike mainline, which is proposed to be constructed in the existing median area.

Tom Fargo asked if the southbound lanes of the existing Turnpike are going to be dedicated as a town road. Chris responded that this has not yet been determined. The abandoned section of the Turnpike may provide access to the Drive-In, but details of that aspect have yet to be determined.

Gail Pare noted that a cemetery is located on the Drive-In property. Chris Waszczuk responded that the Department was aware of the cemetery, and stated that it would be shielded from disturbance.

Issue 7: Accommodation of Trucks to DMV

One comment noted that the proposed road reconfigurations in Dover would change the access to the Division of Motor Vehicles office on Boston Harbor Road. It was requested that the intersection designs make accommodations for truck access to the facility, particularly on US 4 westbound at Spur Road.

In response, Chris Waszczuk stated that the Exit 6 proposed improvements at the US 4/Spur Road, Spur Road/local connector, and local connector/Boston Harbor Road intersections will be designed to safely and efficiently accommodate heavy commercial vehicles including tractor-trailer trucks. There were no questions or further discussion from the ATF or audience on this issue.

Summary of Recommended Layout

After summarizing the issues related to the proposed highway layout, Chris Waszczuk asked if all members of the ATF were in agreement with the recommended modifications (*i.e.*, Wentworth Terrace, sidewalks in Newington and Dover, access to the Exxon-Mobil station, elimination of Exit 5, reconfiguration of Exit 6 with traffic signals and the scale of the proposed improvements).

Tom Fargo stated that he was not sure if residents of Wentworth Terrace were aware of the proposed change. Chris Waszczuk responded that the modification was made at the request of Wentworth Terrace residents with input from the City Planner. The change requires no new rights-of-way, so it is regarded as a minor change. Therefore, the Department does not plan any further public discussion on that change.

Chris Cross stated that the proposed modifications in Newington reflect requests made by the Town at the hearing. The access to Exxon-Mobil seems reasonable and due to the considerable input, discussion and review, resulted in an acceptable circulation pattern on the property and a longer on-ramp for acceleration. As such, he agreed that the proposed layout is acceptable.

Steve Bird, City of Dover, stated that he was very pleased that the sidewalk elements in Dover were added to the project, although he could not make any commitment on behalf of the City with regard to the required maintenance agreement.

Hearing no further comments, Chris Waszczuk continued his presentation of hearing issues.

Other Major Elements

Issue 8: Concern with Tree Clearing and Loss of Forested Median (in Newington)

Several residents, from both Dover and Newington, asked that the clearing of trees be kept to a minimum. Two comments were received that requested that NHDOT consider modifying the project to prevent the loss of the forested median area in Newington, noting that the median helps keep the area attractive. Some expressed the concern that the trees help to minimize traffic-related noise in their neighborhoods and suggested trees be planted to replace those removed to help dampen noise.

In response, Chris stated that the Department and FHWA will strive to minimize tree clearing to the extent practicable. To minimize noise, four segments of noise barriers are proposed in Dover totaling approximately 15,600 linear feet in length to mitigate for noise levels from the Turnpike. In addition, a comprehensive landscaping plan will be developed as part of the project's final design, and new trees will be planted in select locations to mitigate for the mature trees that will be lost.

However, the Department can not redesign the project to avoid impacting the forest median in Newington. As summarized in the ROTC, the Department and FHWA have held numerous meetings with the communities, Advisory Task Force, and resource agencies to build consensus on a preferred design. The Advisory Task Force, the Newington Selectboard, Newington Planning Board, and Newington Conservation Commission have endorsed the Preferred Alternative in Newington, which proposes to construct the Turnpike within the wooded median. This approach has a number of advantages, particularly with regard to constructability and maintenance of traffic during construction as well as minimizing right-of-way impacts to private property. Also by constructing the Turnpike within the wooded median, the facility is further removed from the residential area in Newington.

Chris then asked for comments and discussion from the ATF and the audience.

One resident asked whether trees could replace the noise barrier in the future (*i.e.*, after the trees mature)? Chris replied that, contrary to conventional wisdom, noise studies have proven that trees don't actually attenuate noise to any appreciable degree. A fairly wide (several hundred feet) and dense treed area is needed to appreciably reduce noise. He added that landscaping will be included where possible.

Sandra Kerns asked what the barriers will look like. Chris stated that the barriers will be designed as part of the final design for the project. They may be constructed of wood, precast panels, possibly plexiglass in some locations, or possibly other designs. These options will be considered more closely and discussed in community meetings as the project moves forward. Seventy-five percent of the benefited residents would need to agree to the barrier construction.

Tom Fargo asked about the fate of contaminated soil from the Interim Improvement Project that had been stockpiled in the median. Chris stated that the contamination was very low level and that the soil would be used as fill on the project.

Issue 9: Mixed Comments on the General Sullivan Bridge (GSB)

Several comments were received on the proposal to rehabilitate the General Sullivan Bridge as part of the project. Most supported the rehabilitation, although some questioned the value of the rehabilitation, indicating concern that the reconstruction of the bridge, and its future maintenance,

would be an unnecessary burden on taxpayers. Other comments on the bridge requested more detail on the rehabilitation, and requested that the rehabilitation be completed in a manner so as to allow emergency vehicles to use the bridge in the future.

Summarizing the Department and FHWA's response to the issue, Chris covered the following points:

- The General Sullivan Bridge, regardless of its present day condition, is a landmark structure, the second highest rated historic bridge in the state, and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

- The bridge offers a unique and important bicycle / pedestrian connection across Little Bay, as well as, other recreational activities, and is deemed a Section 4(f) resource with protection under Federal law.

- The Department has estimated the cost to rehabilitate the General Sullivan Bridge at approximately $26 million dollars. This represents a net cost to the project of approximately $10 million dollars taking into account the cost that would be required to dismantle and remove the structure, as well as the cost required to provide a replacement recreational connection across the Bay.

- The Preferred Alternative requires the existing approach embankment (on the Dover side) to be removed to accommodate a two-way local connector, and proposes to retrofit the end of the General Sullivan Bridge with a new pedestrian/bicycle structure. The two-way connector is required to provide access to the east side of Hilton Park and the Wentworth Terrace neighborhood. This local roadway is proposed to replace the existing one-way Hilton Park connector that is situated beneath the Little Bay Bridges. This underpass location provides the benefit of utilizing the existing grade-separated crossing and reconstructing the Turnpike on the same general grades as currently exist.

- Incident management and emergency response will be fully accommodated on the widened Little Bay Bridges once the bridges are reconstructed. Future incident management and response will be greatly improved over the current situation, negating the need to consider the General Sullivan Bridge for incident response or contingent emergency use.

Following Mr. Waszczuk's summary of the issue and the Department's response, the following points were discussed.

Mr. Jack Pare asked if it would still be possible for someone to ride a bike over the modified General Sullivan Bridge to access Dover Point Road. Chris Waszczuk explained that this will definitely be possible. The bridge will be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and it will be unnecessary for the bicyclist to dismount.

Mr. Pare also suggested that since the intent is to rehabilitate the GSB only for bicycle/pedestrian, one could save money by not rehabilitating it to a 6-ton capacity. Chris Waszczuk explained that the bridge truss itself is in reasonably good shape and can accept legal loads. The 6-ton capacity would relate primarily to the design of the floor system which will need to allow emergency access (from Newington). Cliff Sinnott advocated that rehabilitating the GSB to carry legal loads would add redundancy (vis-à-vis the Little Bay Bridges), especially given the critical location of the crossing and the cost of rehabilitating to a 6-ton capacity. Chris responded that the need for redundancy was relatively low considering the widening proposed for the LBB, and the cost of rehabilitation to 6-ton capacity was approximately $3-5M less than the cost to rehabilitate to legal load capacity.

Issue 10: Noise Barriers

Numerous comments were received on the level of noise experienced by local residents and the proposal to construct noise barriers to mitigate for future noise levels. Most comments were in favor of the barriers, although some comments objected to the barriers, citing their potential impact on the views associated with the area, including business exposure. It was also suggested that the barriers be constructed prior to bridge and roadway construction, and that "quiet pavement" be considered as further mitigation.

Chris summarized the response provided in the ROTC as follows:

- A detailed noise analysis was conducted for this project in accordance with NHDOT's and FHWA's guidelines and regulations on such analyses. Approximately 300 properties were included in the analysis.

- The Department proposes to construct four noise barriers totaling approximately 15,600 feet in length in Dover. The barriers were evaluated as to their feasibility and cost-effectiveness, and will be of sufficient height and length to reduce noise levels (at least 5 decibels) at exterior, ground level locations for approximately 170 residential properties.

- The noise barrier along the west side of the Turnpike in Dover is proposed to end at the Little Bay Bridge, which will provide a feasible and cost-effective termination for the barrier while providing a noise reduction benefit to the Dover Point Road neighborhood. Noise barriers will not be constructed on the bridge, which would eliminate potential impacts to views from the bridge.

- Additional meetings with the benefited property owners will be held to discuss the noise barriers and ascertain whether the barriers are desired or not. In accordance with the Department's Policy and Procedural Guidelines, a minimum of 75% of the first row property owners will need to support the installation of the barrier in order for it to be constructed. During these meetings with the neighborhoods, more detailed information on the type, height, special features, and length of the noise barriers will be discussed and input gathered.

- The Department will design the barriers to be as low as possible while still achieving the necessary noise reductions, and will consider various architectural treatments and landscaping during the final design phase to mitigate the visual impact of the barriers.

- The Department will review the project's constructability and advance the early construction of the proposed noise barriers, where deemed appropriate and practicable.

- As part of the project's final design effort, the Department will investigate the merits and feasibility of utilizing "quiet pavement" or "porous pavement" to reduce the effect of tire noise throughout the project area.

Following Mr. Waszczuk's summary, a general discussion of the noise barriers ensued, focusing on their visual impact. Chris pointed out that the barriers would be subject to approval of the residents closest to them and that 3-D models of the barriers had been prepared as part of the public hearing process. He noted the high level of support from Dover residents and City officials. Cliff Sinnott asked what the barriers would look like for motorists traveling the Turnpike. Would it create a tunnel-like effect? Chris explained that the Turnpike would be quite wide (approximately 150') in relation to the height of the barriers, which would be between 12 and 14 feet high. Thus, the barriers would not seem to create a "tunnel effect."

Issue11: Toll Related Concerns

Another major area of public comment related to the toll-related issues. All of the comments pointed to various problems that the commenters believed are related to the Dover toll facility, especially the creation of excessive traffic on Dover Point Road as a result of motorists avoiding the tolls. Various solutions were proposed in the comments including the permanent or temporary elimination of tolls at this location or the permanent relocation of the toll plaza.

In response to these concerns, Chris provided the following information from the ROTC:

- It has been consistently stated and acknowledged from the project's initiation that the Dover toll facility and toll-related issues fall outside the project study area and scope of study.

- The project's study area was identified and established following the 1998 Route 16 Corridor Protection Study and the 2000 Newington-Dover Feasibility Study by determining that the current and future Turnpike traffic operating conditions north of the toll plaza were satisfactory. In contrast, the section of the Turnpike between Exit 1 and the Dover Toll Plaza operates at a poor level of service, both in the current and future design year.

- Changes to the Turnpike tolling system require State Legislative and Executive Council approval, and may have revenue impacts. These are considered state-level issues potentially affecting the entire Turnpike system, not project level matters.

- The Department has reviewed the historic traffic data in the area. Since the early 1990s, the data shows an ever-increasing volume of traffic on the Turnpike, while traffic growth on Dover Point Road and US 4 has been relatively flat. This data, along with the regional travel demand projections demonstrate a greater regional use of the Turnpike over time as opposed to a large diversion of traffic to the secondary routes. The travel demand projections indicate that the design year (2025) volume of traffic between Exits 3 and 6 requires the type and scale of Turnpike improvements as reflected in the Preferred Alternative.

- The Department completed a rudimentary evaluation to identify possible alternative locations and the merits of potentially relocating the Dover Toll Plaza further north. The only potentially suitable location is situated north of Exit 9 and south of the Long Hill Road underpass. Toll revenue at this location would be considerably lower since traffic north of Exit 9 is roughly 35% lower than the traffic at the Dover Toll Plaza. Additionally, the construction cost of the toll plaza's relocation is estimated at approximately $10 to $13 million (including the removal of the Exit 6 facility). This new location would also be very close to the Rochester plaza and simply shift the noise and perceived toll effects onto a different neighborhood.

Due to the aforementioned reasons, the Department does not propose to relocate or eliminate the Dover Toll Plaza, nor implement a toll test and suspend toll collections.

Chris then solicited comments from the ATF and audience members. Tom Fargo asked if there had been any documentation of improvements in the level of service at the toll booths since E-ZPass was implemented. Chris responded that the LOS is indeed better than before E-ZPass. He noted that data indicates that 56% of the vehicles passing through the toll booths use E-ZPass. He also noted that historic traffic volumes data and regional travel demand projections demonstrate greater regional dependency on the Turnpike, i.e., more traffic uses the Turnpike, than diverts to secondary routes such as US 4 and Dover Point Road.

Frank O'Callaghan added that during the 1993-2003 period, daily traffic volumes along the Turnpike at the Dover toll facility increased by approximately 55 percent, while average daily traffic volumes along Dover Point Road (north of Exit 6) decreased by approximately 5 percent. During the same 10-year period, weekday PM peak hour traffic volumes (northbound) exiting the Turnpike at Exit 6 to travel eastbound on Dover Point Road decreased by approximately 7.5 percent. During the 7-year, 1996-2003 time period, weekday PM peak hour traffic volumes (northbound) exiting the Turnpike at Exit 6 to travel west on US 4 decreased by approximately 11 percent.

Issue 12: Stormwater Management

Several comments were received on potential water quality impacts to Little Bay. Among the concerns and recommendations outlined in public comments were requests for more detailed information on the stormwater management system, whether infiltration was incorporated into the management plan, and whether the temperature of the discharged stormwater had been considered. Concern about potential erosion and sedimentation problems during construction were also raised.

In response, Chris stated that additional details regarding the stormwater management system and treatment devices will be provided as the project progresses through the final design stages. At the EIS phase, the general drainage patterns and approximate locations for detention basins are identified. These locations and the estimated sizes of the areas are rough approximations. The presence of wetlands and other site constraints will be factored into the sizing and final layout of the treatment devices as the areas are refined during the final design process. Chris noted that the Department has worked with NHDES to develop the stormwater treatment needs and the available methods to assess the potential water quality impacts associated with roadway runoff. The Department has also collaborated with the University of New Hampshire (UNH) Stormwater Center to explore the latest in innovative treatment measures, such as gravel wetlands and infiltration measures that can provide a high level of treatment for the various pollutants associated with highway runoff. As a result of this effort with the University and coordination with NHDES, the most up to date best management practices and design guidance will be incorporated into the water quality treatment measures. A predictive modeling procedure provided by NHDES will determine the appropriate stormwater treatment measures. Additionally, the Department will evaluate and consider the use of infiltration devices for stormwater treatment as another option for advanced treatment in certain locations.

With regard to the comments pertaining to the potential for water quality degradation and the need for erosion control planning, review and inspection procedures, the Department will require construction contractors to provide detailed erosion control plans including contingency measures and periodic turbidity monitoring of the site discharge during wet weather events. The Department will also require the contractors to provide frequent inspections of construction sites to maintain compliance with permit conditions. Stringent requirements will be incorporated in the final design plans to minimize any movement of eroded sediment beyond the work area. These requirements are typically a condition of the Corps of Engineers and NHDES Wetlands Bureau permits, as well as part of the Section 401 Water Quality Certificate that will be required for the project.

The Department will also evaluate the potential impacts to wetlands and surface waters that may result from shading effects and will address these potential impacts in the FEIS. Cliff Sinnott asked for clarification as to whether the Department and/or FHWA would provide funding to assist the NH Estuaries Project (NHEP) in their monitoring efforts in the area. Chris indicated that the Department would be willing to coordinate with the NHEP, but it is questionable if NHDOT/FHWA would support the NHEP with funding. Chris indicated that the project would attempt to meet a no-net increase in pollutant loading, so it was not clear whether such monitoring would be justified. Chris asked Peter Walker for some clarification of the process of stormwater management analysis and design. Peter indicated that it would likely be very feasible to reduce the overall level of

pollutant loading from the highway – even with an overall increase in impervious surface area. This is because the highway was originally built before effective stormwater management practices were required. The Section 401 Certificate (issued by NHDES) would likely require a modeling and design effort to clearly demonstrate a reduction in pollutant loading. Peter noted that NHDES is in the process of updating its requirements for stormwater treatment and that a great deal of progress has been made over the last few years in the design of structural best management practices (BMPs) such as gravel wetlands, *etc.*

Cliff noted that both he and Cynthia Copeland are members of the NHEP management committee. He recommended cooperation with the NHEP so as to eliminate the potential for duplication of effort. If monitoring of water quality in the bay is a requirement of the project, Cliff believes that it would be most effective to take advantage of the monitoring stations/efforts already in place through the NHEP.

Tom Fargo asked about the design of updated BMPs - are they proprietary to VHB? Peter Walker replied that conceptual designs for improved BMPs are fairly widely available and are not proprietary. VHB has been active in working with the University of NH Stormwater Engineering Center to refine the design and the modeling of pollutant loading. Much of the updated information on this subject is available through the UNH website.

Issue 13: Implementation of TDM & TSM Measures, Long-term Funding Commitment for Bus Alternatives

Several public comments were received in support of the various TDM and TSM measures presented in the Draft EIS. Specific recommendations were made with regard to securing permanent funding of improved bus services in the region, or funding through the project's design year (2025), as well as several other possible TDM measures. The methodologies and assumptions to project ridership estimates of public transportation were also questioned. Other TDM/TSM suggestions included: coordination with NNEPRA in assessing potential small scale rail improvements along the Mainline; paying employees not to drive alone; offering employees "location-efficient" mortgages that provide incentives to employees to live closer to work; construction of housing within the Pease Tradeport; and improving the Lee traffic circle to enhance the viability of NH 125 as an alternate route to the Turnpike.

Chris summarized the Department's response to the issues as follows:

- The Department acknowledges that the City of Dover has initiated a CMAQ improvement project to connect the downtown area, Dover Transportation Center, and other prominent places of employment with the proposed Exit 9 Park and Ride facility, and acknowledges that this connection is an important link in the regional transit system and that the project may be underfunded. The Department will continue to support the City in pursuit of additional CMAQ funding for the project.

- The Department also acknowledges the support for the early implementation of the TDM and TSM elements of the Preferred Alternative and will strive to implement these elements prior to or in the early stages of construction. These TDM elements, which are intended as mitigation for the potential of increased congestion during construction, will provide a more balanced transportation system in the seacoast region and travel opportunities other than single occupant vehicles (SOV). These elements include new park-and-ride facilities in Rochester, Dover and Lee, expansion of bus and rail service, and support for employer-based measures. Although the suggestion of "location-efficient" mortgages to reduce commuter traffic within the project study area is a novel idea which private lenders in partnerships with municipalities may wish to explore, the Department proposes, as part of the Preferred

Alternative, to help fund the seacoast area Transportation Management Association (TMA), known as Seacoast Commuter Options, for the duration of the Turnpike's construction or a maximum five-year period to work with and encourage employers to promote employee travel by means other than SOVs.

- With respect to the suggestion that housing be constructed at Pease as a means to help reduce travel across the bridges, the Department acknowledges that mixed use developments offer opportunities to reduce daily vehicular traffic by combining trips and/or by substituting walking, bicycling and transit/trolley service for commuting and other travel purposes. At the Pease Tradeport, the generation of daily vehicular traffic has been reduced as a result of the implementation of transit service, employer-based strategies to reduce SOVs, the development of ancillary commercial activities (such as banking, convenience stores and restaurants) and the provision of pedestrian (sidewalk) and bicycle system connectivity. Since transit service within the study area and at the Tradeport will be expanded as part of the Preferred Alternative, additional reductions in vehicular traffic generated at the Tradeport can be expected. Since current zoning at the Tradeport does not allow residential use, further reductions in daily vehicular traffic resulting from some employees residing at the Tradeport appears infeasible.

- With respect to transit service, the methodology and assumptions which form the basis of estimating future transit ridership will be updated for presentation in the FEIS and will include recent ridership data, recent modeling enhancements and updated costs for parking, fuel and travel time.

- Developing and maintaining a sustainable funding source for the area's transportation system, transit included, is a challenge that transcends the Newington-Dover project. The need for sustainable funding has been recognized as an issue by both the Department during development of the New Hampshire Transportation Business Plan and by the State Legislature. The Department has proposed a maximum five-year commitment to fund the transit-related elements of the Preferred Alternative as mitigating elements to the potential for increased levels of congestion during construction and overall dependency on SOV travel in the region.

- The limited capacity along NH 125 between Exit 12 of the Spaulding Turnpike in Rochester and the Lee traffic circle diminishes the viability of NH 125 as a suitable alternative route to the Spaulding Turnpike, independent of traffic operations at the Lee traffic circle. In addition, commuters from the Rochester area traveling south to Portsmouth and communities along the I-95 corridor would not travel US 4 and NH 125 as an alternative route to the Turnpike.

Cynthia Copeland stated that COAST is concerned about the non-Federal match required by the CMAQ programs. She stated that the communities provide match wherever there is service. If NHDOT commits to only five years of funding, that would only guarantee increased bus services for those years. She reiterated the need for a longer-term funding commitment. Cliff Sinnott supported Cynthia's comments, and stated that a creative approach to sustainable funding would be needed. For example, he suggested that it may be time to consider park-and-ride fees. Chris Waszczuk noted that the problem of limited resources is prevalent, and not just restricted to bus services. The intent of the five-year NHDOT commitment was to mitigate the impact of construction (which is about a five year window) and allow COAST and Wildcat to build and maintain ridership. The question of whether to implement fees at park-and-ride sites is an issue that transcends this project, requires more discussion, and would require legislative approval.

Tom Morgan asked Chris Waszczuk to clarify his statement regarding trips to the Tradeport - are they not increasing? Chris stated that TDM actions at the Tradeport are reducing the potential travel demand at the Tradeport. He added that changing land use policies at the Tradeport is beyond the scope of the project. Since residential development is prohibited under the PDA development plan, it is not feasible. Frank O'Callaghan suggested that the Town could use its position on the Board of Directors for the PDA as a forum to raise and discuss this issue.

A member of the audience suggested that NHDOT could use the data generated by the E-ZPass system to collect information on commuting patterns to better plan a bus system. Chris acknowledged that this was a good idea. However, it does raise privacy issues. In order to develop the bus alternatives, NHDOT and FHWA coordinated with the local bus system operators such as COAST, C&J Trailways and the UNH Wildcat System. The system operators have a strong sense of which existing or new routes need to be expanded or created. Chris also pointed out that the first phase of the EIS process involved collection of traveler surveys, journey to work information, *etc.* Cynthia Copeland asked if the Lee park-and-ride site was still part of the TDM package. Chris confirmed that it was.

Issue 14: Secondary Growth Concerns

The Seacoast MPO noted general concurrence that the Newington-Dover project would not induce substantial growth. However, while concurring with the use of the Regional Economic Model, Inc. (REMI) model for making socioeconomic predictions, the MPO expressed concern that the modeling projected growth to be relatively negligible, and questioned with the manner in which the countywide model results (particularly the Rockingham County data) were interpolated to represent the project study area. The MPO suggested this methodology be reviewed. They also noted concern regarding the assumptions used in estimating the percentage of wetlands within the socio-economic study area and potential wetland impacts that could be caused by the induced growth. Finally, they recommended that a Community Technical Assistance Program be incorporated into this project.

Chris reviewed the ROTC in responding to this comment:

- The Department acknowledges the MPO's assertion that the project would not induce substantial growth. This is substantiated by the fact that growth has and continues to occur in the communities north of the Little Bay Bridges without regard for the congestion levels within the project area. While the delay associated with traffic congestion in the project area is certainly a factor in determining regional economic trends, the results of the REMI model suggest that other factors also influence growth in the area. Individuals and businesses make decisions based upon a complex set of factors related to economic benefit and quality of life such as housing costs, health care, environmental characteristics, safety/security, standard of living, shelter and social interaction. The EIS contains information about property values and local tax rates which are also critical factors used by people and businesses to evaluate options about how and where to locate. Thus, while anecdotal evidence may suggest that the chronic congestion on the bridges plays a role in people's economic decisions, traffic congestion is one of a number of factors, the balance of which likely outweighs the issue of congestion within the project area in determining regional growth patterns. It is also important to note that nearly all of the growth in the study area is expected to occur regardless of whether the Turnpike is improved or not, in response to other influences (such as the cost of housing) involving overall quality of life and continued economic prosperity found in New Hampshire. Further, it is not clear whether the additional growth that has been identified by the REMI model, and the associated land conversion, is growth that otherwise would not occur, or growth that would simply occur later in time if the project were not completed. A more thorough discussion of these factors (particularly housing costs) will be included in the Final EIS.

- With regard to the treatment of Rockingham County data, it is important to note that the REMI model was used to estimate population growth on a county basis. Due to how model input data is collected, the county level is the smallest unit for measuring possible social and economic impacts. The model does not allow for analysis of population, employment and housing below the county level. A simple proportional approach was therefore used to analyze potential economic impacts for the Rockingham County portion of the Socio-economic Study Area – which is a standard and accepted statistical practice for this type of analysis. However, given the concerns expressed by the Seacoast MPO and others, the sections of the Final EIS that discuss secondary growth issues will be updated to consider the effects of allocating 100% of the secondary growth to the Rockingham County communities within the Socio-economic Study Area. Also, the methodology used to allocate the projected future growth and corresponding potential wetland impacts will be re-assessed and data updated in the Final EIS.

- Due to the relatively minor level of secondary growth related to the project, the Department does not propose to incorporate a Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) for the communities in the area. The CTAP project established for the I-93 corridor has developed several practical resource booklets to help other communities statewide proactively plan and manage growth in their communities. These booklets, as well as other pertinent material are available on the Department's website at http://www.rebuildingi93.com/content/ctap.

Bill O'Donnell (FHWA) clarified that the analysis presented in the Draft EIS remains valid, but that the FEIS would present a "what if" analysis that uses some of the even more conservative assumptions suggested by the Seacoast MPO.

Issue 15: Mitigation

Many comments were received on the proposed natural resource mitigation package as presented in the Draft EIS and at the 2006 public hearing. Nearly all of the comments were favorable, especially with regard to the preservation of the Tuttle Farm and the Blackwater Brook area in Dover and the Watson Property in Newington. The Town of Newington commented that they did not highly value the preservation or restoration of the Drive-In parcel.

Chris reported that the Department acknowledged and appreciated the communities' support for the project's mitigation package. In response to the property owner's request and with the support of the public, NHDOT, in partnership with the City of Dover, has expedited the acquisition of a conservation easement on the Tuttle Farmstead to permanently preserve the 120-acre farm. The preservation was consummated on January 29th, 2007 with the conservation easements executed and property rights transferred to the City, the Department, and Strafford Rivers Conservancy. NHDOT is also working closely with the City to permanently protect the Tsimekles property, a 105-acre parcel located in the Blackwater Brook watershed that is undergoing the threat of development. Should an agreement with the City and developer to acquire the parcel or large portion thereof not be reached, the DEIS identified several other parcels in the Blackwater Brook area that are deemed worthy of preservation and permanent protection, which the Department will then pursue to fulfill the mitigation requirements of the project in Dover.

The Department will also continue to coordinate the restoration and preservation elements, as identified in the DEIS, with Pease, the Town of Newington, and the property owners of the mitigation parcels to finalize the mitigation requirements of the project in Newington.

Cynthia Copeland thanked Chris for the NHDOT's efforts to expedite the mitigation acquisitions.

Additional Comments on the DEIS

Chris next referred to a slide and enumerated a number of additional comments on the DEIS received from the ACOE, USEPA, NHF&GD an NHDES. Comments include requests for clarification or additional information on the following items:

- Water Quality Monitoring & Stormwater Management
- Mitigation (*i.e.*, restoration opportunities, functional replacement)
- Secondary and Cumulative Impacts
- Construction Impacts
- Air Quality Modeling and Air Quality Conformity
- More Detailed Information on Bridge Pier Construction
- More Detailed Information concerning work on Pease Property
- TDM Ridership Methodology
- Coordination and General Construction Requirements for USCG Permit

UPDATE OF PROJECT COSTS

Chris Waszczuk provided an update of estimated project costs of the Preferred Alternative. He referred to a graphic which summarized and updated the 2005 (DEIS) cost estimate to 2007 dollars (FEIS). The cost estimate has increased from approximately $207.8 million (2005) to approximately $236.0 million (2007). This increase, of about 15 percent, is primarily due to increased materials costs, such as steel and asphalt.

Tom Fargo asked if the Exit 9 park-and-ride project is included in the cost estimate. Tom noted that he had not seen any construction on the park-and-ride, although it was apparently pending. Chris indicated that the Exit 9 park-and-ride was indeed included in the cost estimate, that a construction bid was awarded to a contractor, and that construction would be going forward soon.

Cynthia Copeland asked for an update on the status of the proposed Dover TSM measures. Chris replied that the improvements to the Exit 6 northbound off ramp had already been completed. The proposed Exit 6 southbound on-ramp merge improvement/re-stripping is proposed to occur next year (2008) as part of a paving project.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Chris noted that an important meeting with the Special Committee (*i.e.*, the three Executive Counselors that will make the formal decision on the right-of-way) is scheduled for August 22nd at 2:00 PM in Room 114 at NHDOT Headquarters in Concord. At this public meeting, the Department will present the Report of the Commissioner, and will ask for formal approval of the proposed highway layout.

OTHER COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

Chris Waszczuk asked for any remaining questions or comments before the closing of the meeting. Tom Fargo asked about the process for noise barrier neighborhood meetings. He stated his

recommendation that residents of Cote Drive should be treated as "first row" residences for purposes of deciding whether to construct the barriers. Chris replied that both the ATF and public would be invited to the neighborhood meetings to discuss the noise barrier design.

Chris Cross stated that the phasing of construction to minimize impacts on traffic was a major point of discussion during the previous ATF meetings. It now seems like the availability of funding may be the determining issue. In his opinion, it would be important to come back to the ATF if there is a major change in the phasing of construction.

Following this last comment, Chris Cross adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:45 pm.

Newington-Dover EIS
NH 16 / US 4 / Spaulding Turnpike
NHS-027-1(37), 11238

WELCOME

Advisory Task Force (ATF) Meeting

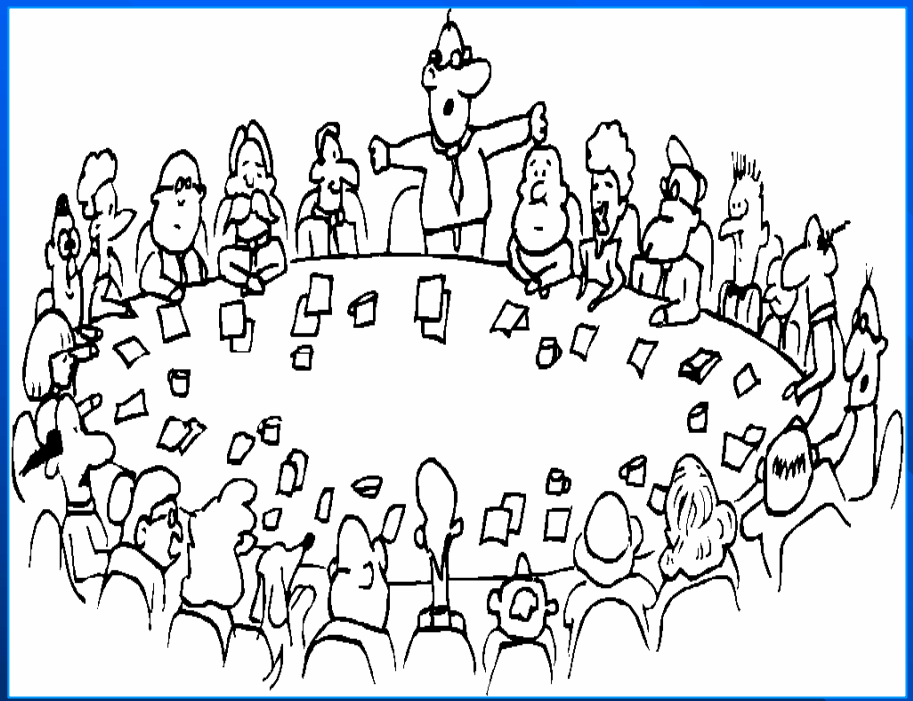
Newington Town Hall

July 26, 2007

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- ATF Role and Responsibilities
- Review Project Status & Updated FEIS Schedule
- Review Public Hearing & DEIS Comments
- Updated Project Cost – Preferred Alternative
- Upcoming Public Meetings
- Adjournment

ATF Role and Responsibilities



- Purpose
- Protocol
- Adoption of January 18, 2006 Meeting Minutes
- Comments/ Questions

Updated Project Schedule

- Phase 1: March 2004 (Scoping Report)
- Phase 2: January 2005 (Rationale Report)
- Phase 3: July 2006 (DEIS)
- Phase 4: September 21, 2006 Public Hearing
- Phase 5: September 2006 – January 2008
  - FEIS Publication & Distribution: October 2007
  - FHWA Record of Decision: January 2008
- Final Design: July 2008 – June 2012 (funding dependent)
- Construction: Spring 2010 - Fall 2016 (funding dependent)

Public Comment Summary

4	RPO	Impacted Residential Property Owner
4	BPO	Impacted Business Property Owner
30	CC	Concerned Citizen
3	CB	Concerned Business
6	CG	Concerned Group/Organization
14	TO	Town / City Official
3	RO	Regional Official
7	SO	State Official
2	GO	Other Government Official
73	TOTAL RESPONSES (HRG & DEIS)	

46	Responses from Dover
14	Responses from Newington
2	Responses from Other Communities
11	Responses from Agencies / Others

Public Comment Summary (con't)

Support Project		27
Oppose Project		5
3 Lanes on LBB not 4 Lanes		4
Rail/Mass Transit	pro	6
Rail/Mass Transit	con	0
Park and Ride	pro	3
Park and Ride	con	0
Soundwalls	pro	11
Soundwalls	con	2
GSB Rehabilitation	pro	6
GSB Rehabilitation	con	1
Other Noise Miitgation		6
Other Design Issues		13
Secondary Growth Impacts		4
Environmental Mitigation		23
Other Environmental Issues		16
Economic/Planning Mitigation		5
Property Acquisitions	pro	13
Property Acquisitions	con	0
Minimize Tree Clearing / Landscaping Mitigation		8
Impacts to Individual Properties		7
Hilton Park Improvments		2
Toll Plaza Concerns		10
Sidewalk Requests/Concerns		8
Other Issues		32

Public Hearing Comments – Issues Potentially Affecting Layout

- Concern with Scale of Proposed Improvements, Adverse Effects of 8-Lanes
- Concern with Proposed Re-configuration of Exit 6 & Added Traffic Signals
- Mixed Support for Elimination of Exit 5
- Request for Sidewalks on Dover Point Road & Other Pedestrian & Bicyclist Accommodations in Dover
- Request for Pedestrian & Bicyclist Accommodations in Newington
- Concern with Re-configured Access into Exxon
- Accommodation of Trucks to DMV

Public Hearing Comments – Other Major Elements

- Concern with Tree Clearing & Loss of Forested Median (in Newington)
- Mixed Comments on General Sullivan Bridge
- Noise Barriers
- Toll Related Concerns
- Stormwater Management
- Implementation of TDM & TSM Measures, Long-term Funding Commitment for Bus Alternatives
- Secondary Growth Concerns
- Mitigation Comments

Additional Comments on DEIS

- Received Comments from ACOE, USEPA, NHF&GD, & Various Division within NHDES
- Comments include clarification or additional information on the following items:
  - Water Quality Monitoring & Stormwater Management
  - Mitigation (I.e. restoration opportunities, functional replacement)
  - Secondary & Cumulative Impacts
  - Construction Impacts
  - Air Quality Modeling & Air Quality Conformity
  - More Detailed Information on Bridge Pier Construction
  - More Detailed Information concerning work on Pease Property
  - TDM Ridership Methodology
  - Coordination & General Construction Requirements for USCG Permit

Proposed Modifications to Preferred Alternative

Updated Project Cost Preferred Alternative

Updated Project Cost Preferred Alternative

- DEIS (2005 Dollars)

Preferred Alternative - DEIS 2005 Dollars (Millions)	
Engineering	$16.9
ROW Acquisitions & Mitigation	$9.8
Construction	
Newington Segment	$39.8
Dover Segment	$39.5
Bridge Segment	
LBB	$55.5
GSB	$23.0
Br. Approaches	$13.0
* TDM, Bus, Rail, P'n'R	$10.3
Total Construction	**$181.1**
Project Total	**$207.8**

* Includes Dover P'n'R ($2.5M) & Joint Sponsored CMAQ Project ($1.7M)

- FEIS (2007 Dollars)

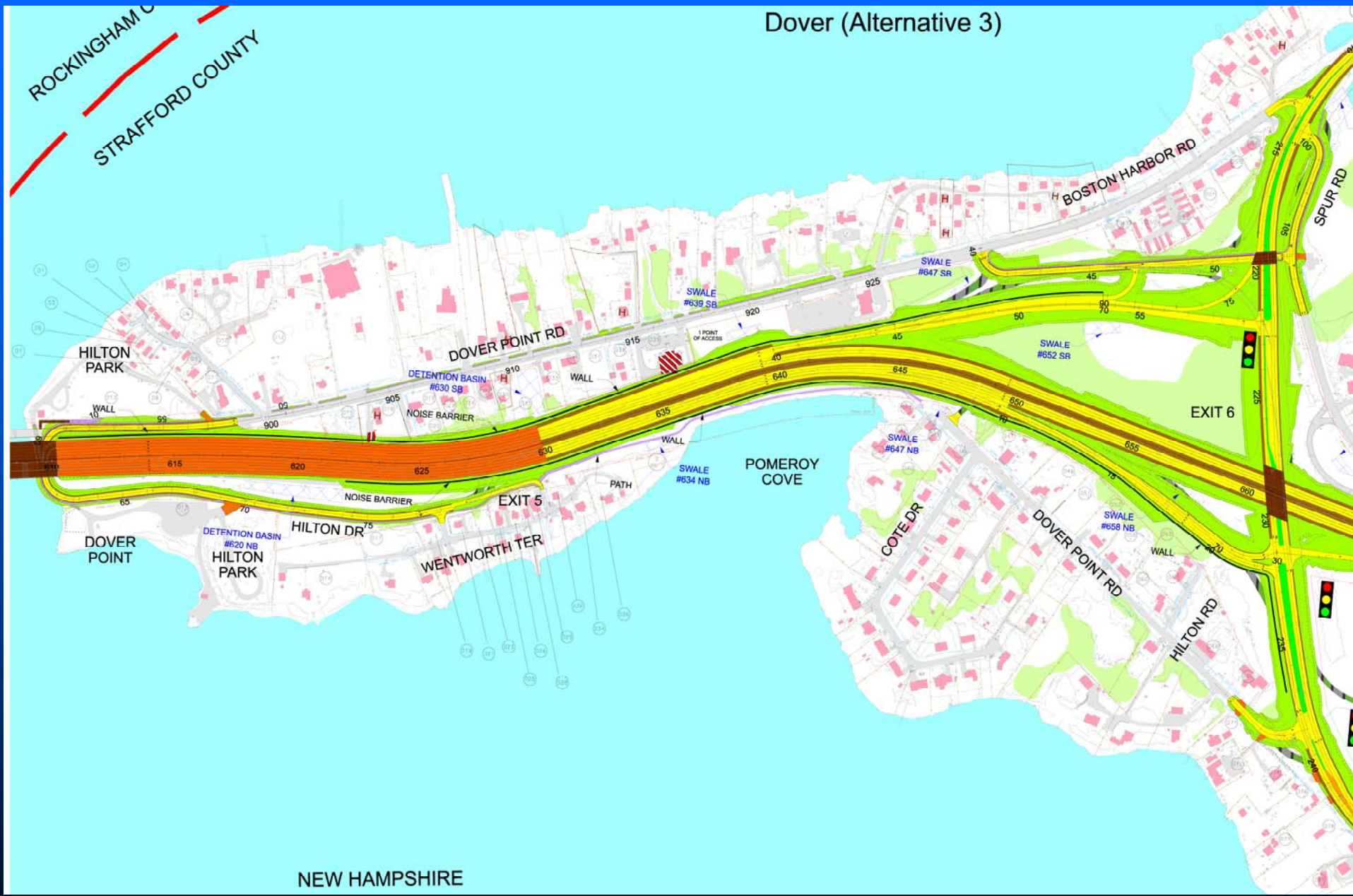
Preferred Alternative - FEIS 2007 Dollars (Millions)	
Engineering	$16.9
ROW Acquisitions & Mitigation	$9.8
Construction	
Newington Segment	$48.4
Dover Segment	$44.5
Bridge Segment	
LBB	$63.0
GSB	$26.0
Br. Approaches	$15.6
* TDM, Bus, Rail, P'n'R	$11.8
Total Construction	**$209.3**
Project Total	**$236.0**

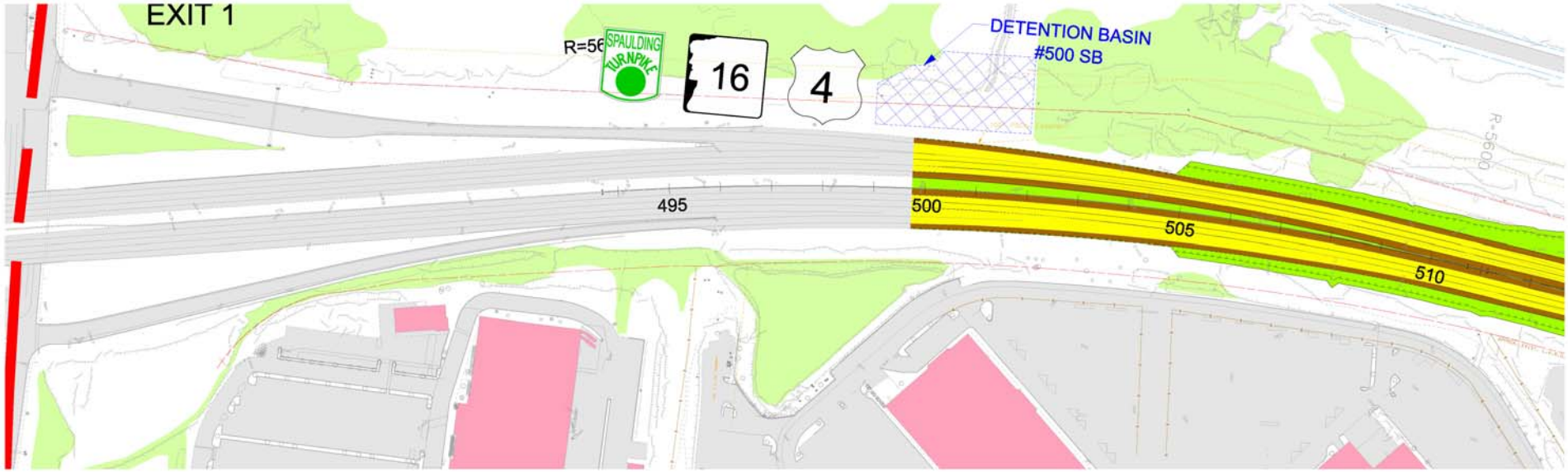
* Includes Dover P'n'R ($3.5M) & Joint Sponsored CMAQ Project ($1.7M)

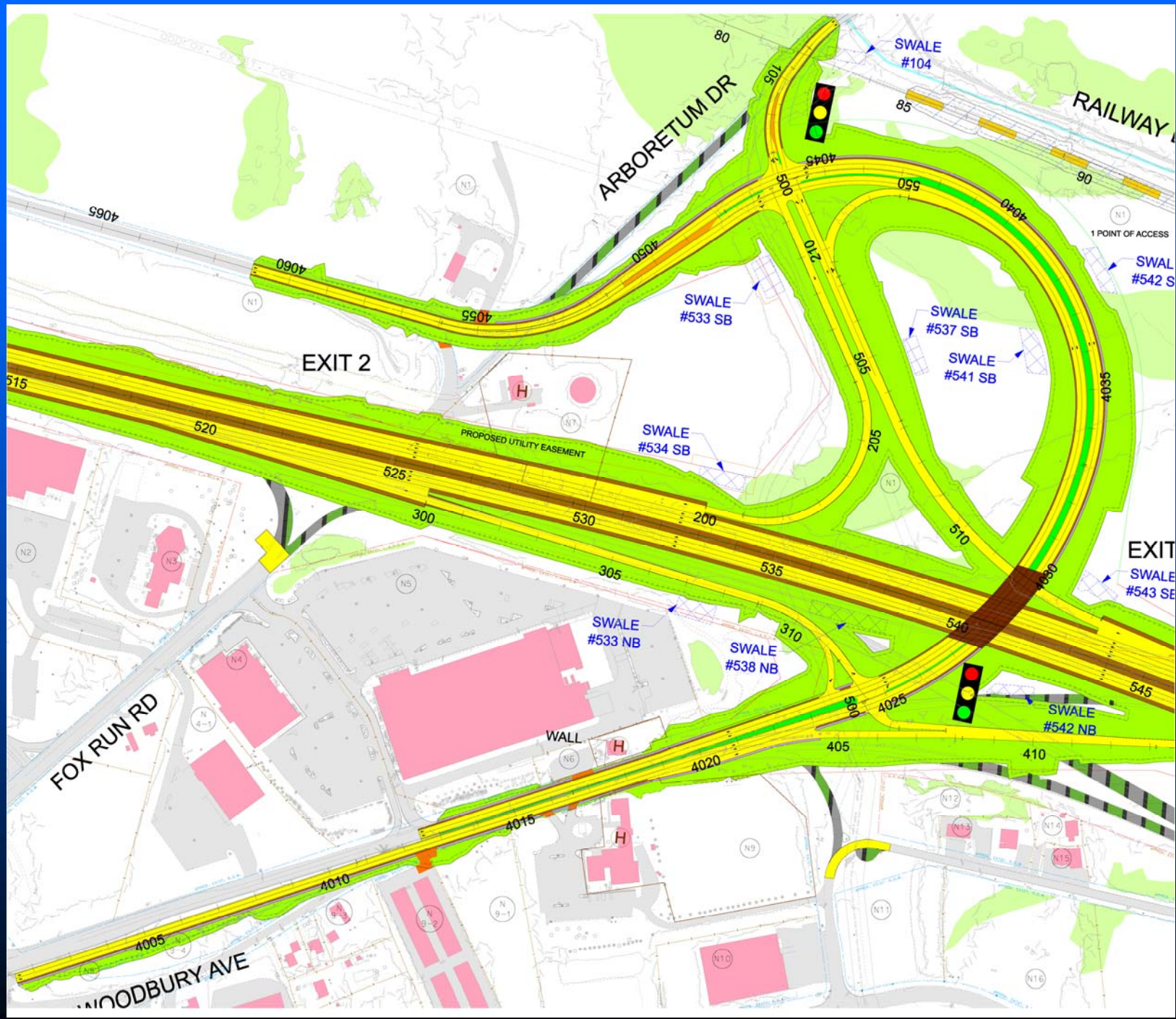
Upcoming Meetings

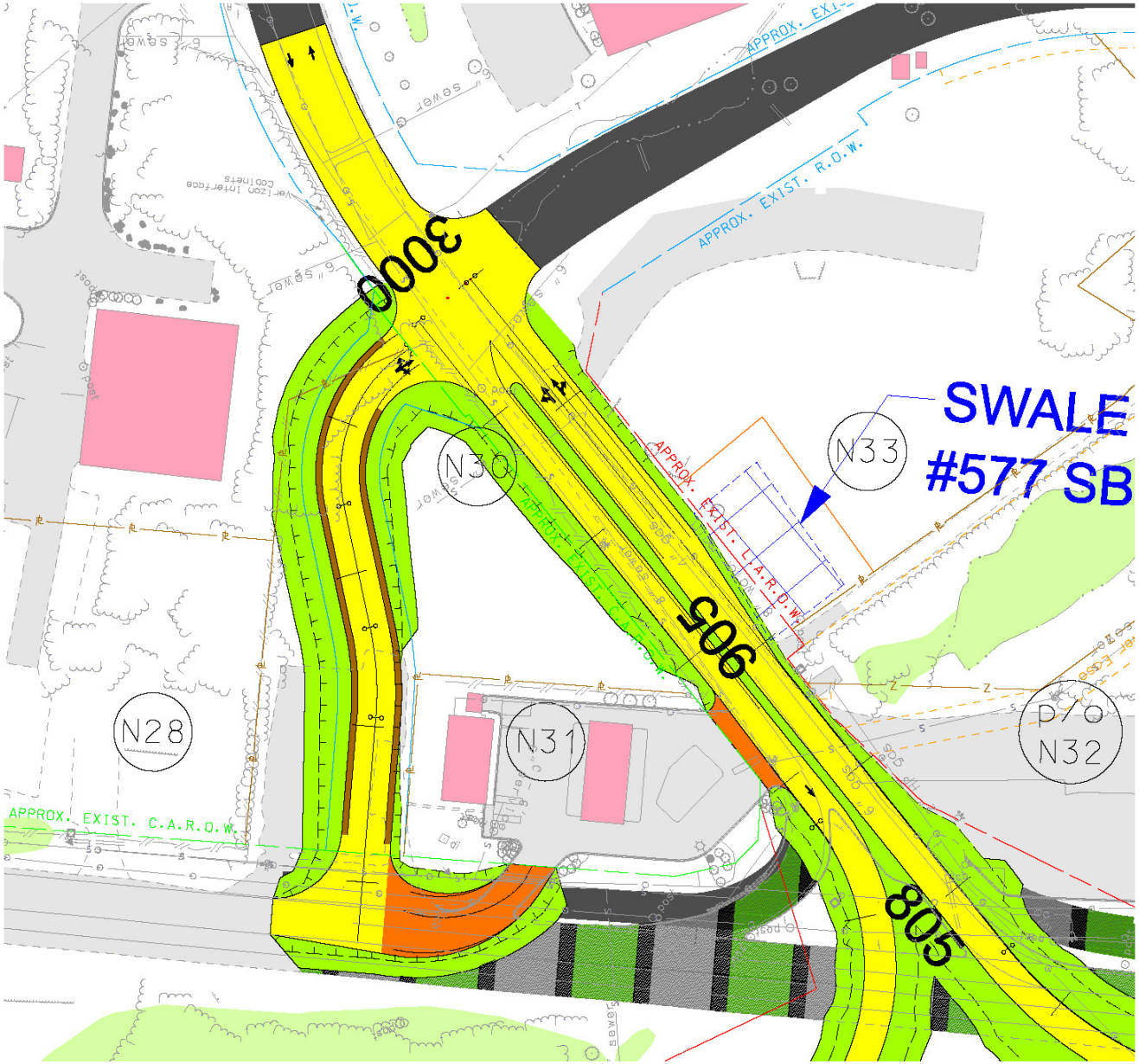
- Special Committee Meeting
  - August 22, 2007 @ 2:00pm at John O. Morton Bldg (Room 114), 7 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH
  - Request Layout Approval
- Future ATF Meeting??

THANK YOU


Dover (Alternative 3)
ROCKINGHAM C
STRAFFORD COUNTY
BOSTON HARBOR RD
SPUR RD
SWALE #647 SR
SWALE #639 SB
SWALE #652 SR
DOVER POINT RD
HILTON PARK
DETENTION BASIN #630 SB
WALL
NOISE BARRIER
EXIT 6
EXIT 5
SWALE #647 NB
SWALE #634 NB
POMEROY COVE
PATH
HILTON DR
DETENTION BASIN #620 NB
HILTON PARK
DOVER POINT
WENTWORTH TER
COTE DR
DOVER POINT RD
SWALE #658 NB
WALL
HILTON RD
NEW HAMPSHIRE


EXIT 1
R=56
SPAULDING TURNPIKE
16
4
DETENTION BASIN
#500 SB
R=5600
495
500
505
510


ARBORETUM DR
RAILWAY
SWALE #104
1 POINT OF ACCESS
EXIT 2
SWALE #533 SB
SWALE #537 SB
SWALE #541 SB
SWALE #534 SB
PROPOSED UTILITY EASEMENT
SWALE #533 NB
SWALE #538 NB
SWALE #542 NB
WALL
FOX RUN RD
WOODBURY AVE
80
85
90
105
210
205
310
405
410
4065
4060
4055
4050
4045
4040
4035
4030
4025
4020
4015
4010
4005
500
505
510
515
520
525
530
535
540
545
550


3000
905
805
SWALE
#577 SB
N33
N30
N28
N31
P/O
N32
APPROX. EXIST. R.O.W.
APPROX. EXIST. L.A.R.O.W.
APPROX. EXIST. C.A.R.O.W.

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

NEWINGTON-DOVER, NHS-027-1(37), 11238

SPAULDING TURNPIKE IMPROVEMENTS

PUBLIC HEARING

September 21, 2006 -- SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS SCHOOL -- 7:00 PM

As a result of the Public Hearing held on September 21, 2006 for the **NEWINGTON-DOVER, NHS-027-1(37), 11238** project, the following layout with limitations to access is established as shown on the Hearing Plan and as described below:

Beginning at a point in the travel way of the Spaulding Turnpike (NH 16) north of Exit 1 (Gosling Road Interchange) in the Town of Newington, NH and continuing northerly approximately 3.5 miles to the Dover Toll Plaza, just north of Exit 6 (US 4) in the City of Dover, NH.

The layout involves the reconstruction and widening of the Little Bay Bridges and the Spaulding Turnpike. Between Exits 1 and 3, the Turnpike will be shifted slightly to the west and widened to create three lanes in each direction to match the section south of Exit 1. Between Exits 3 and 6, the Little Bay Bridges and the Turnpike will be reconstructed on new alignment and widened to create four lanes (three travel lanes and one auxiliary lane) in each direction. North of Exit 6, the Turnpike will be widened to create three lanes in each direction to match into the Dover Toll Plaza. The project layout continues and expands the Limited Access Right-of-Way designation that exists for the Turnpike interchanges and connector roadways, with modifications as appropriate to accommodate the proposed infrastructure improvements.

The layout includes the reconstruction, reconfiguration, and consolidation of the interchanges along the Spaulding Turnpike at Exit 2 (Fox Run Road), Exit 3 (Woodbury Avenue), Exit 4 (Nimble Hill Road and Shattuck Way), Exit 5 (Hilton Drive) and Exit 6 (US 4 and Dover Point Road). The Exit 2 ramps at Fox Run Road will be eliminated and traffic routed to Exit 3. Exit 3 will be reconfigured to a full service interchange with access provided to the Pease Tradeport and Arboretum Drive. A portion of Arboretum Drive, approximately 1000 feet in length, will be relocated to form a new signalized intersection at the terminus of the new southbound Exit 3 ramps and terminus of the extended section of Woodbury Avenue. Woodbury Avenue will be reconstructed from the intersection of Fox Run Road and extended through the Exit 3 interchange area. The Exit 4N median reverse direction ramps (previously discontinued under a separate project) will be eliminated. Exit 4 will be adjusted to maintain the on and off-ramps at Nimble Hill Road and Shattuck Way. Access to Nimble Hill Road from properties directly adjacent to the Turnpike and adjacent to the on and off-ramps will be modified; a new local roadway will be constructed to provide access to the affected properties. Work on Nimble Hill Road will begin at the intersection with Shattuck Way and the new local road and continue approximately 600 feet to the Turnpike. The work to the existing northbound Exit 4 ramps will be limited to the area directly adjacent to Shattuck Way. The Exit 5 ramps will be discontinued and a new local two-way Connector Road, from Wentworth Terrace and Hilton Park, under the Turnpike to connect with Dover Point Road will be constructed. The existing ramps from Cote Drive to the Turnpike will be discontinued.

Exit 6 will be reconstructed to a full service modified diamond-type interchange. The work on US 4 will begin at the eastern end of the Scammell Bridge and continue over the Turnpike connecting to Dover Point Road and ending at the intersection with Homestead Lane.

Signalized intersections at the southbound ramps, the northbound ramps and Dover Point Road are proposed. The existing signalized intersection on US 4 with Boston Harbor Road and Spur Road will be modified to eliminate the traffic signal and restrict movements to right-turns only. A new local two-way connector road from Spur Road, beneath US 4, to Boston Harbor Road with access to the southbound on-ramps will be constructed.

The General Sullivan Bridge will be rehabilitated to function as a pedestrian/bicycle/recreational facility with the ability to carry emergency and maintenance vehicles from the Newington side. The northern approach embankment will be removed and the northern end of the bridge modified to accommodate the two-way local connector road and allow for continued pedestrian, bicycle and recreational use.

Also included are all potential mitigation and stormwater management areas as may be required to comply with State and Federal permitting requirements and best management practices as shown on the project plans. Further evaluation and coordination with State and Federal agencies will be required to determine the final components of the mitigation package, and in turn, the specific parcels, or portions there of, to be acquired.

The layout also includes the accommodation for a future elevated rail spur line that would extend from the east along the existing rail spur alignment over the Turnpike to the west into the Pease Tradeport.

The limitation of access previously established for the Spaulding Turnpike will be maintained and expanded to prohibit any non-interchange accesses. No access will be allowed to the Turnpike except via designated interchanges.

The project further identifies new Park and Ride facilities near Exit 9 in Dover, Exit 13 in Rochester, and near the US 4 and NH 125 intersection in Lee. Also, other travel demand management components including improvements to bus and rail, and support for employer-based measures will be considered.

Limitations of access, as well as exceptions, are as follows:

NEWINGTON

Woodbury Avenue Extension (west of the Spaulding Turnpike)

PEASE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (Parcel N1): One (1) point of access onto Woodbury Avenue Extension.

Spaulding Turnpike (NB & SB)

Limitation of access previously established for the Spaulding Turnpike will be maintained. No access to the Turnpike will be allowed.

River Road (east of the Spaulding Turnpike)

STATE OF NH remnant land with frontage along River Road located between parcels N18 & N20: One (1) point of access onto River Road.

Spaulding Turnpike (SB, remnant segment from station 550 to station 577 west of the Spaulding Turnpike)

Limitation of access previously established for the Spaulding Turnpike and exceptions thereto will be maintained.

DOVER

Spaulding Turnpike (NB & SB)

Limitation of access previously established for the Spaulding Turnpike will be maintained. No access to the Turnpike will be allowed.

Dover Point Road (east of the Spaulding Turnpike)

STATE OF NH remnant land with frontage along Dover Point Road located between the Turnpike and parcel D80: One (1) point of access onto Dover Point Road at station 238+60.

Dover Point Road (west of the Spaulding Turnpike)

STATE OF NH remnant land with frontage along Dover Point Road abutting parcel D39 to the north: One (1) point of access onto Dover Point Road.

The above limitations of access are established in accordance with RSA Section 230:46.

The following decisions are the Department's resolution of issues as a result of the testimony presented at the September 21, 2006 Public Hearing and written testimony subsequently submitted.

1) Ms. Gail Pare (188 Little Bay Road, Newington) expressed thanks to the Department for the response to public comments throughout the advisory process.

Mr. Bruce Woodruff (Dover City Planner, Advisory Task Force member) commended the Department for the context-sensitive design process and advisory task force procedure of project development.

Mr. Leon Kenison (Facilities Director, Pease Development Authority) extended thanks to the Department staff and engineering consultants for the cooperation exhibited during the project development process.

Mr. David Scott (Dover City Councilor) complimented the Department for the thought that went into the proposal and the process that was followed.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) expressed their appreciation for the Department's expeditious completion of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the Department's cooperation with the communities, Advisory Task Force, and Planning Commissions in developing the preferred alternatives.

Ms. Thelma Briggs (10 Cote Drive, Dover) expressed thanks for the informative and professional presentation at the Public Hearing and prior public meetings.

Response: The Department appreciates the efforts and input from the large number of people that attended the public meetings and followed the project's development and progression. The Department will continue to progress the project in an expeditious manner and will continue to solicit input from the communities, the Advisory Task Force, and Planning Commissions on various aspects of the project during the project's final design.

2) Mr. Leon Kenison (Facilities Director, Pease Development Authority, on behalf of PDA Board of Directors) expressed support for the preferred alternative as described in the Layout Petition noting the Board's concurrence that the preferred alternative will enhance safety and provide congestion relief. The Board also recognized that the new northerly entrance at Exit 3 would help disperse travel patterns within the Tradeport, lessening the travel demand at the Exit 1 Interchange, and making Pease's presence more valued. The Board also acknowledged and supported the proposed

accommodation of future rail service into the Tradeport via an elevated crossing of the Turnpike, as well as the preservation of the necessary right-of-way for its future construction.

Mr. Bruce Woodruff (Dover City Planner, Advisory Task Force member) expressed support for the proposed Turnpike improvements in Dover noting that the needed infrastructure improvements are provided while minimizing the impacts to Dover Point and Hilton Park.

Mr. Tom Morgan (Newington Town Planner), Ms. Eleanor Hendricks (401 Dover Point Road, Dover), Mr. Leon Kenison (Facilities Director, Pease Development Authority, on behalf of PDA Board of Directors), Mr. Scott DeCost (General Manager, Fox Run Mall / Crossings at Fox Run), Mr. John O'Reilly (Chair, Newington Board of Selectmen), Mr. Denis Hebert (Vice-Chair, Newington Planning Board), and Mr. Roy Greenleaf III (Newington Fire Chief) endorsed the proposed Turnpike improvements in Newington. Mr. Morgan, Mr. O'Reilly, and Mr. Hebert noted that the low elevation of the Turnpike in the Preferred Alternative would minimize noise impacts upon the Town.

John Brough (240 Old Garrison Road, Dover), Ms. Linda Pontbriand (40 Belanger Drive, Dover), Ms. Patricia Rose (17 Cote Drive, Dover), Ms. Thelma Briggs (10 Cote Drive, Dover) and Ms. Jan MacMillan and Mr. Gordon Smith (parcel D056, 14 Boston Harbor Road, Dover) expressed support for the proposed Turnpike improvements.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO expressed their support for the project, as the project will vastly improve safety. They stated that the proposed improvements have been the top transportation priority of the Seacoast MPO for ten years.

Ms. Joyce Elkovarti (112 Bellamy Woods, Dover) concurred with the need for the bridge widening, but requested that the aesthetics of the bridge be considered so that the bridge's appearance not compromise the views of the water.

Response: The Department acknowledges and appreciates the community's support and will progress the project as presented at the Public Hearing, subject to the modifications contained herein.

Careful attention to aesthetic considerations, particularly concerning landscaping, the Little Bay Bridge structure, and proposed soundwalls, will be made during the project's final design.

3) Ms. Caren Curti Peloso (39 Spur Road, Dover), Mr. Jeff Hollinger (former State Representative, 346 Back Road, Dover), Mr. David Scott (Ward Three Dover City Councilor, 220 Back Road, Dover) expressed concern that the proposed widening of the Turnpike to eight lanes in Dover would have an adverse impact on the natural resources and ruin the character of Hilton Park and Dover Point.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO stated their belief that the proposed improvements would enhance safety and travel efficiency. However, they expressed concern with the scale of the improvements and requested assurances of the necessity of the number of lanes proposed and the width of shoulders and other elements that contribute to the extent of the highway expansion.

Ms. Nora Kelly (348 Dover Point Road, Dover) expressed concern with the proposed widening of the Turnpike to eight lanes and stated her preference for the proposed Bus Alternative.

Mr. John Scruton (99 Sixth Street, Dover) expressed concern with the proposed Turnpike widening and its impact upon the rural character of the region, and doubted the efficacy of the proposed widening on reducing traffic congestion.

Response: The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluated a number of different alternatives including a 6-lane alternative (three basic travel lanes in each direction). The travel demand projections for the project's design year of 2025 and the traffic capacity analyses that focused on safety and traffic operations along the Turnpike and across the Little Bay Bridges between Exit 3 (Woodbury Avenue) in Newington and Exit 6 (US 4/Dover Point Road) in Dover indicate that a 6-lane alternative, in conjunction with a combination of transportation system management (TSM) and travel demand management (TDM) measures (which include improved bus service) would not be sufficient to accommodate the future travel demands for the corridor. A sensitivity analysis of traffic volume growth on the Little Bay Bridges indicates that a 6-lane bridge would reach capacity and result in unacceptable traffic operations by 2017 (eight years prior to the design year). Furthermore, beyond the limits of the bridge, construction of six lanes between Exits 3 and 6 would result in congestion and system failure in 2017.

In addition, widening the Turnpike to provide three lanes in each direction would result in a very similar footprint as widening to provide four lanes in each direction. The typical cross-sectional width for a 6-lane highway (122 feet) is nearly as wide as the 8-lane highway (146 feet). Additionally, the interchange configurations at Exits 3 and 6 are relatively the same under both 6- and 8-lane alternatives, with the exception that the length of acceleration and deceleration lanes would be longer under a 6-lane alternative in order to better accommodate traffic entering and exiting the Turnpike. With regard to environmental impacts, the difference between a 6-lane and 8-lane footprint is minor (less than 5 percent) when comparing impacts to wetlands, wildlife habitat (unfragmented lands), groundwater (stratified-drift deposits), noise (number of impacted receptors), and right-of-way (number of residential and business acquisitions).

The Preferred Alternative proposes three basic travel lanes and one auxiliary lane in each direction between Exits 3 and 6. The auxiliary lanes enable traffic to safely and efficiently enter, exit and switch lanes between Exits 3 and 6. Shoulder areas are proposed to be 10 feet to 12 feet wide. Experience and safety studies of limited access facilities have demonstrated the safety benefit associated with providing adequate space for disabled vehicles. Narrow shoulder areas are deemed to be safety hazards and are not recommended as they give the appearance of being safe areas for stopping but are not due to their confining width and the relatively high traveling speeds along the Turnpike.

4) Ms. Eleanor Hendricks (401 Dover Point Road, Dover), Mr. Douglas DeDe (143 Locust Street, Dover), Mr. Raymond Bardwell (199 Spur Road, Dover), and Mr. Richard Morin (264 Dover Point Road, Dover) expressed opposition to the proposed modification of the Exit 6W ramp from the existing free-flow loop to a diamond configuration under signal control. They felt that the signal would operate inefficiently, resulting in congestion, traffic queues on the Turnpike and Dover Point Road, and increased traffic diversion onto City streets (e.g. Spur Road).

Ms. Caren Curti Peloso (39 Spur Road, Dover), Mr. Jeff Hollinger (former State Representative, 346 Back Road, Dover), Mr. David Scott (Ward Three Dover City Councilor, 220 Back Road, Dover) expressed concern that the proposed traffic signals on Dover Point Road would create potential backups on Dover Point Road and the Turnpike. They felt the traffic signals would place an additional burden on Spur Road and Boston Harbor Road as motorists would be inclined to utilize these roadways as alternatives to avoid the congestion and backups.

Response: The signalized diamond interchange configuration proposed for Exit 6, as part of the Preferred Alternative, will provide for safe and efficient traffic operation for northbound traffic desiring to travel west on US 4. Other potential ramp types and interchange configurations were studied in detail and were found to be less desirable.

The existing single lane loop ramp would not provide sufficient capacity for the anticipated future traffic volumes. In addition, the radius of the existing loop ramp is geometrically deficient relative to current standards and driver expectations. A two-lane loop ramp configuration is not recommended due to safety concerns associated with vehicles, including heavy commercial trucks, traveling at relatively high speeds exiting the Turnpike, traveling side by side in a circular manner, and then merging with local traffic from Dover Point Road. Further, improving the radius of a potential 2-lane loop ramp would increase wetland impacts and severely impact a number of residential properties along Homestead Lane without absolving the traffic operational and safety concerns inherent in the 2-lane loop ramp configuration. In addition to the issue of safety and more severe impacts, a 2-lane loop ramp alternative would cost approximately $2 million more to construct (primarily due to the increased span and width of the new bridge carrying US 4 over the Turnpike) than the signalized diamond interchange configuration (exclusive of right-of-way and mitigation costs).

Under the Preferred Alternative, the storage lengths on the proposed diamond shaped northbound off-ramp will sufficiently accommodate the anticipated traffic queues without vehicles backing up onto the Turnpike. Traffic operations at the signalized Exit 6 northbound off-ramp intersection with US 4 will be coordinated with signal operations to the east at the Dover Point Road intersection, and to the west at the southbound entrance ramp to the Turnpike. The coordinated signal system will process traffic flow efficiently, minimizing delays and vehicle queuing. Detailed studies conducted for all three intersections indicate that backups will not occur along Dover Point Road or on the Turnpike. All three signalized intersections are projected to operate at Level of Service (LOS) B or better during the 2025 weekday morning and evening peak hours, with the exception of the northbound ramps which will operate at LOS C. These anticipated levels of operation meet or exceed desired standards of LOS for new roadway facilities. With the facility operating at high levels of service with modest delays, motorists will have no reason to seek alternative routes.

5) Mr. Robert Battles, Esq. (representing Wentworth Terrace property owners, Dover) expressed support for the proposed elimination of Exit 5 and the modified neighborhood access via Dover Point Road, as well as the widened two-way Hilton Drive. He felt the proposed improvements would minimize impacts on the Wentworth Terrace neighborhood and provide safer access, not only for the Wentworth Terrace residents, but Turnpike travelers, as well.

Mr. Jack Bernier (25 Wentworth Terrace, Dover) expressed concern that the proposed elimination of Exit 5 and alterations to Wentworth Terrace would create a dead-end road and make truck egress from the neighborhood difficult. He recommended that the portion of Hilton Drive extending north from the existing ramps to the pump station be retained to create a loop road.

Mr. Raymond Bardwell (199 Spur Road, Dover) recommended that Exit 5 be retained to provide convenient access to Hilton Park and not divert traffic to Dover Point Road and Boston Harbor Road.

Mr. James Yeames (409 Dover Point Road, Dover) expressed concern that the elimination of Exit 5 would increase traffic on Dover Point Road. Mr. Yeames noted that all traffic entering and exiting Hilton Park would need to pass by his home once Exit 5 is eliminated.

Response: The closure of Exit 5 is necessitated from a safety and traffic operations standpoint due to its proximity to Exit 6 and the projected increase in traffic (2025 travel demand) along the Turnpike between Exits 3 and 6. Insufficient distance (approximately 2,000 feet) exists between the on-ramp from Exit 5 and the off-ramp to Exit 6 to safely accommodate the weave between vehicles entering the Turnpike at Exit 5 and vehicles exiting the Turnpike at Exit 6. Traffic safety and efficiency aside, reconstructing Exit 5 to minimum design standards would severely impact Hilton Park and the Wentworth Terrace neighborhood, and would preclude the opportunity to construct soundwalls (as proposed with the Preferred Alternative) to reduce existing and future traffic noise levels in the neighborhood.

The potential traffic diversions to Hilton Drive, Dover Point Road and Boston Harbor Road resulting from the closure of Exit 5 have been analyzed. A portion of the existing eastbound traffic on US 4 that seeks to travel north on the Turnpike, and currently enters and exits Hilton Park and Wentworth Terrace via Exit 5, would be re-routed to Exit 6 (which is proposed to include a new northbound on-ramp to the Turnpike) and Dover Point Road. The overall re-distribution of traffic associated with the Preferred Alternative is anticipated to result in a modest increase in traffic along Dover Point Road in the vicinity of Boston Harbor Road. Both Dover Point Road and Boston Harbor Road have adequate capacity to accommodate the projected traffic increases. A detailed capacity analysis conducted for the intersection of Boston Harbor Road/Dover Point Road and the proposed local connector road shows LOS A operations through the year 2025.

Relative to commercial vehicles accessing and exiting the Wentworth Terrace neighborhood and Hilton Drive, the proposed improvements to Hilton Drive in the vicinity of Wentworth Terrace and Hilton Park (including the local connector roadway traversing under the Turnpike and adjacent to the channel) will be designed to accommodate tractor-trailer trucks. Also, as suggested, a portion of Hilton Drive extending north from the existing ramps to the pump station will be retained to create a loop road for trucks to more easily exit the neighborhood.

6) Mr. Scott Myers (Mayor, City of Dover) noted that the project would result in increased traffic along Dover Point Road (west of the Turnpike) and Hilton Drive. He strongly urged that a sidewalk be constructed along Dover Point Road and Hilton Drive to complete a gap section and connect the Boston Harbor Road sidewalk with the pedestrian path at Pomeroy Cove.

Mr. Edward Cartnick (53 Boston Harbor Road, Dover) asked that a sidewalk be constructed along Dover Point Road to connect the existing Boston Harbor Road sidewalk to Hilton Park to mitigate for the anticipated traffic increase along that section of road.

Mr. Raymond Bardwell (199 Spur Road, Dover) questioned whether a sidewalk would be constructed alongside the proposed Boston Harbor Road to Spur Road connector and whether lighting would be provided along the underpass structure beneath US 4.

Mr. Richard Morin (264 Dover Point Road, Dover) suggested that pedestrian and bicycle paths be constructed throughout the Dover Point area as part of the project.

Mr. Robert Battles, Esq. (representing Wentworth Terrace property owners, Dover) expressed support for the walkway that is shown on the plans as being reconstructed, and which connects Dover Point Road, Pomeroy Cove, Wentworth Terrace, and Hilton Park.

Response: The Department acknowledges that the section of Dover Point Road west of the Turnpike will see a moderate increase in traffic once the project is constructed and Exit 5 discontinued. The Department has reviewed the area and proposes to incorporate a sidewalk (approximately 2700 feet) along the west side of Dover Point Road to improve pedestrian safety and provide pedestrian connectivity between the proposed sidewalk at Hilton Park and the existing sidewalk opposite the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) property. The sidewalk is proposed to be constructed provided that the additional easements and/or property rights can be secured from the property owners; the additional impacts to wetlands (which are anticipated to be minor) will be permitted; and the City of Dover agrees to maintain (both winter and summer maintenance) the sidewalk in accordance with its accepted policies and practices as mandated in RSA 231:92-a. A municipal agreement between the City and the Department documenting maintenance responsibilities will need to be executed prior to this sidewalk (and the other sidewalks) being incorporated into the project.

A sidewalk is proposed to be constructed alongside the proposed connector road connecting Spur Road with Boston Harbor Road. Lighting is proposed to be installed as part of the proposed underpass structure beneath US 4.

New sidewalks are proposed in the following locations: along the north side of Spur Road between the Bayview Park parking area and the Scammell Bridge; along the west side of the connector road between Spur Road and Boston Harbor Road and along the west side of Dover Point Road as described above; along the new two-way connector beneath the Little Bay Bridges; and along Hilton Drive connecting to the reconstructed walkway along Pomeroy Cove. No other sidewalks are proposed in Dover as part of the project.

As part of the project, the Department proposes to build 4-foot wide shoulder areas, which will accommodate bicycles, along the reconstructed segments of Dover Point Road, US 4, Spur Road, Hilton Drive, and the two connector roadways noted above.

7) Mr. Scott Myers (Mayor, City of Dover) asked that tree clearing be kept to a minimum and that replacement evergreen trees be planted as part of the project to mitigate for the loss of trees.

Mr. and Mrs. Matthew and Angela Carter (parcel D058, 335 Dover Point Road, Dover) asked that project setbacks and tree clearing be minimized and replacement evergreen trees be planted.

Mr. Dean Trefethen (9 Danielle Lane, Dover) asked that trees be planted to replace those removed between the new roads and existing homes to help dampen noise.

Ms. Barbara Rushmore (191 Spur Road, Dover) asked that every effort be made to save mature trees.

Response: The Department is cognizant of the sensitive and scenic nature of the area and will strive to minimize tree clearing and setback areas to the extent practicable. As presented at the Public Hearing, the Department also proposes four segments of soundwalls in Dover totaling approximately 15,600 linear feet in length to mitigate for the elevated noise levels from the Turnpike. In addition, the Department proposes to develop a comprehensive landscaping plan, as part of the project's final design, and plant new trees in select locations to mitigate for the mature trees that will be lost due to construction and to landscape other locations along the corridor, as appropriate.

8) Ms. Gail Pare (188 Little Bay Road, Newington) expressed concern that the reconstruction of the Spaulding Turnpike in Newington would eliminate the existing wooded median. She urged that the design preserve a natural median, or at the very least, consider heavily planting trees alongside the Turnpike to screen the facility.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission), and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO expressed concern for the loss of the forested median in Newington. They requested that the Department seek to minimize the impact and restore trees where possible to replace the visual and sound absorbing buffer the trees provide.

Response: The Department has held numerous meetings with the communities, Advisory Task Force, and resource agencies to build consensus on a preferred design. The Advisory Task Force, the Newington Selectboard, Newington Planning Board, and Newington Conservation Commission have endorsed the Preferred Alternative in Newington, which proposes to construct the Turnpike within the wooded median. This approach has a number of advantages, particularly with regard to constructibility and maintenance of traffic during construction, as well as minimizing right-of-way impacts to private property. Also by constructing the Turnpike within the wooded median, the facility is further removed from the residential area in Newington.

As part of the project's final design, the Department proposes to develop a comprehensive landscaping plan and plant new trees in select locations to mitigate for the mature trees that will be lost due to construction and to supplement other locations with new plantings along the corridor, as appropriate.

9) Mr. Tom Morgan (Newington Town Planner) requested that the project address the need for pedestrians to cross between the east and west sides of the Turnpike in Newington.

Mr. John O'Reilly (Chair, Newington Board of Selectmen) and Mr. Denis Hebert (Vice-Chair, Newington Planning Board) asked that the design for Exit 3 (Woodbury Avenue) provide a safe and convenient route for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the Turnpike. They also requested that sidewalks be constructed on both sides of Woodbury Avenue from Exit 3 to Fox Run Road to address the volume of pedestrians that utilize Woodbury Avenue and improve safety for people walking along the road. Furthermore, they recommended that dedicated bike lanes and sidewalks be constructed on Arboretum Drive to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists that use this key link, which connects Portsmouth with Strafford County.

Response: The Department acknowledges that the Newington Master Plan recommends that sidewalks be provided along several roadways within Newington's Commercial District, including Woodbury Avenue. The Master Plan also provides for funding such sidewalk construction via negotiations with commercial developers and enterprises located within the Commercial District whose employees, customers and clients could benefit from and utilize such sidewalks.

As part of the Preferred Alternative, the reconstruction of Woodbury Avenue proposes a seven (7) foot wide panel, adjacent to the roadway, to accommodate both a future sidewalk and utilities. Should the Town of Newington agree to accept maintenance responsibilities (both summer and winter maintenance) for the new sidewalks in accordance with its accepted policies and practices as mandated in RSA 231:92-a, the Department will construct new sidewalks on both sides of Woodbury Avenue within the limits of the reconstruction project. Also, a new sidewalk would be provided on the north side of the bridge crossing over the Turnpike and extending through the new Woodbury Avenue/Arboretum Drive/Exit 3 southbound ramps intersection. The sidewalk would then continue along the west side of Arboretum Drive to the location of the first driveway on Arboretum Drive.

Roadside shoulder areas (4 to 5 feet wide) to accommodate bicyclists are proposed within the limits of the project along Woodbury Avenue, the bridge over the Turnpike within the Exit 3 interchange area, and along the reconstructed sections of Arboretum Drive.

10) Ms. Gail Pare (188 Little Bay Road, Newington) expressed support for the proposed preservation of the General Sullivan Bridge noting its historicity.

Mr. Bruce Woodruff (Dover City Planner) expressed support for the rehabilitation and preservation of the General Sullivan Bridge, as it is a highly rated and valued historic resource.

Ms. Eleanor Hendricks (401 Dover Point Road, Dover) questioned the historical value of the General Sullivan Bridge due to its poor condition, and its ability to withstand further deterioration until rehabilitation can begin.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO expressed support for the rehabilitation of the General Sullivan Bridge for bicycle, pedestrian, and recreational use. However, they expressed concern that the details of the rehabilitation, including the removal of the northerly approach and the limited design load of the replacement deck, would preclude its use as a vehicular crossing in contingency emergency situations.

Mr. and Mrs. John and Rosalie Veinott (23 Roberts Road, Dover) recommended that the General Sullivan Bridge be rehabilitated to accommodate emergency use by vehicular traffic in case of incidents on the Little Bay Bridges.

Mr. Richard Stern (516 Shattuck Way) opposed the restoration and future maintenance of the General Sullivan Bridge as an undue burden on New Hampshire taxpayers.

Response: The Department proposes to rehabilitate the General Sullivan Bridge as an element of the Preferred Alternative identified for the project. The General Sullivan Bridge, regardless of its present day condition, is a landmark structure, the second highest rated historic bridge in the state, and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The bridge offers a unique and important bicycle / pedestrian connection across Little Bay, as well as, other recreational activities, and is deemed a historic resource with protection under Federal (USDOT) law. The Department has estimated the cost to rehabilitate the General Sullivan Bridge to a six-ton capacity, which will be able to accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, recreational activity, and emergency vehicles, at approximately $26 million dollars. This represents a net cost to the project of approximately $10 million dollars taking into account the cost that would be required to dismantle and remove the structure, along with the cost required to provide a replacement recreational connection across the Bay.

The Preferred Alternative requires the existing approach embankment (on the Dover side) leading to the General Sullivan Bridge to be removed to accommodate a two-way local connector, and proposes to retrofit the end of the General Sullivan Bridge with a new pedestrian / bicycle structure, which will be fully designed during the final design stage of the project. The two-way connector is required to provide access to the east side of Hilton Park and the Wentworth Terrace neighborhood. This local roadway is proposed to replace the existing one-way Hilton Park connector that is situated beneath the Little Bay Bridges. This underpass location provides the benefit of utilizing the existing grade–separated crossing and reconstructing the Turnpike on the same general grades as currently exist.

The Preferred Alternative proposes the Little Bay Bridges be widened to provide four full travel lanes (12 feet wide) with two full shoulders (10 to 12 feet wide) in each direction. Therefore, incident management and emergency response will be fully accommodated on the Little Bay Bridges once the bridges are reconstructed and widened. Future incident management and response will be greatly improved over the current situation, negating the need to consider the General Sullivan Bridge for incident response or contingent emergency use.

11) Mr. Scott Myers (Mayor, City of Dover), Mr. Bruce Woodruff (Dover City Planner, Advisory Task Force member), Mr. and Mrs. Matthew and Angela Carter (335 Dover Point Road, Dover), Mr. David Scott (Ward Three Dover City Councilor, 220 Back Road, Dover), Mr. Robert Battles, Esq. (representing Wentworth Terrace property owners, Dover), and Ms. Linda Pontbriand (40 Belanger Drive, Dover), endorsed the proposed noise barriers on both sides of the Turnpike, both north and south of Exit 6 to shield the neighborhoods from the highway noise and provide the residents privacy.

Mr. Edward Cartnick (53 Boston Harbor Road, Dover), Ms. Barbara Rushmore (191 Spur Road, Dover), and Mr. Raymond Bardwell (199 Spur Road, Dover) also expressed support for the proposed noise barriers, recommending that they be installed before the highway and bridge construction begin.

Mr. Raymond Bardwell asked that samples of the materials used in the noise barrier construction be provided to the affected residents for inspection and input.

Ms. Joyce Elkouarti (112 Bellamy Woods, Dover) expressed concern with the visual obstruction that the noise barriers would create and requested that the Department seek a way to mitigate the noise impacts upon the Turnpike's abutters without sacrificing the scenic views of the water from the Turnpike.

Mr. Jesse Steed (Dover Point Road, Dover) questioned the effectiveness of the proposed noise barriers and asked if additional mitigation measures would be offered to the abutters impacted by Turnpike noise.

Ms. Patricia Rose (17 Cote Drive, Dover) expressed support for the noise barriers requesting that the lower portion of the walls be solid and the upper portions transparent.

Mr. James Yeames (409 Dover Point Road, Dover) stated that the noise from the Turnpike is objectionable and will become intolerable as traffic increases. He also noted that no noise mitigation is proposed for traffic noise emanating from the Little Bay Bridges. He recommended that noise measurements be taken during summer weekend peak traffic periods to capture the highest noise levels.

Mr. John Scruton (99 Sixth Street, Dover) suggested that the Turnpike be depressed and roofed to reduce traffic noise.

Mr. John O'Reilly (Chair, Newington Board of Selectmen), Mr. Denis Hebert (Vice-Chair, Newington Planning Board), Mr. Tom Morgan (Newington Town Planner) and Mr. Richard Stern (516 Shattuck Way, Newington) requested that noise mitigation measures, including "quiet pavement" or other alternative measures be implemented in Newington to address the noise from the Turnpike.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission), and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO expressed support for the proposed noise barriers but noted concern with the visual impact they would cause. They recommended that the barriers be kept as low as possible while still achieving the necessary noise reductions, and that architectural treatments and landscaping be incorporated to mitigate the visual impact.

Ms. Anne Buckley (parcel D016, owner of K9 Kaos, 430 Dover Point Road, Dover) expressed opposition to the proposed noise barriers. Ms. Buckley noted that the barriers would eliminate her business' exposure to potential customers on the Turnpike, and the reduction in Turnpike noise within the Dover Point Road neighborhood would make the noise emanating from the kennel operations more prominent.

Response: A detailed noise analysis was conducted for this project in accordance with the Department's Policy and Procedural Guidelines for the Assessment and Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise for Type I Highway Projects and Title 23 Part 772 of the US Code of Federal Regulations. Approximately 300 properties in the project area were included in the analysis. As a result of this analysis, the Department proposes to construct four noise barriers totaling approximately 15,600 feet in length in Dover. The barriers were evaluated as to their feasibility and cost-effectiveness, and will be of sufficient height and length to reduce noise levels (at least 5 decibels) at ground level locations for approximately 170 residential properties.

The noise barrier along the west side of the Turnpike in Dover is proposed to end at the Little Bay Bridge, which will provide a feasible and cost-effective termination for the barrier while providing a noise reduction benefit to the Dover Point Road neighborhood. Noise barriers will not be constructed on the bridge.

Additional meetings with the benefited property owners will be held to discuss the noise barriers and ascertain whether the barriers are desired or not. In accordance with the Department's Policy and Procedural Guidelines, a minimum of 75% of property owners, within the first row adjacent to a particular barrier, will need to support the installation of the barrier in order for it to be constructed. During these meetings with the neighborhoods, more detailed information on the type, height, special features, and length of the noise barriers will be discussed and input gathered.

The Department will strive to design the barriers to be as low as possible while still achieving the necessary noise reductions, and will consider various architectural

treatments and landscaping during the final design phase to mitigate the visual impact of the barriers.

The Department will review the project's constructibility and advance the early construction of the proposed noise barriers, where deemed appropriate and practicable.

As part of the project's final design effort, the Department will investigate the merits and feasibility of utilizing "quiet pavement" to reduce tire noise throughout the project area.

12) Ms. Eleanor Hendricks (401 Dover Point Road, Dover) explained that the existing drainage system along Dover Point Road (west of the Turnpike) is deficient, with blocked culverts that have created wetlands along the west side of the road. She also expressed concern with the quality of the stormwater that will drain toward Pomeroy Cove from the widened turnpike. Ms. Hendricks requested the project's design address the deficient drainage and mitigate for the increased runoff expected from the widened pavement that is proposed.

Mr. Robert Battles, Esq. (representing Wentworth Terrace property owners, Dover) and Mr. John Duffy (owner of 15 Wentworth Terrace, Dover) noted existing drainage problems along Wentworth Terrace and expressed concern that the widened Turnpike would direct more runoff to this area, possibly resulting in erosion of the property and the shore of the Piscataqua River.

Response: The Department acknowledges the concerns regarding stormwater runoff and water quality on Dover Point. As part of the project's final design, the Department will closely review and evaluate the existing drainage conditions. Careful attention will be exercised to identify drainage related issues along the Turnpike on Dover Point and not exacerbate the deficient conditions. Detention basins and stormwater treatment areas will be considered as part of the project's final design to provide no net increase in pollutant loadings and to limit the peak runoff flows to pre-existing conditions.

13) Mr. Roy Greenleaf III (Newington Fire Chief) recommended that utilities serving the former drive-in site be re-established and upgraded by the project. He noted that the proposed widening of Woodbury Avenue would require the relocation of aerial utilities and hydrants. He also noted the presence of the high-pressure gas transmission line that is located parallel to Patterson Lane and crosses the Turnpike beneath Exit 3. He added that with future development along Arboretum Drive, the need for additional hydrants in this area should be reviewed. Similarly, he recommended that the adequacy of the water service and hydrants near Exit 4 should be evaluated.

Mr. Steven P. Burnley (Granite State Gas Transmission) noted the presence of an eight-inch high-pressure gas transmission line within the project limits and that the proposed construction would impact and displace up to 80% of the facilities, requiring substantial relocation. The relocation effort could cost four to seven million dollars and will require FERC approvals. He assumed that the cost of the relocations would be borne by the project. He estimated that the required permits would take two to three years to acquire. Mr. Burnley questioned whether the relocation costs would be reimbursed through a combination of Federal and State aid.

Response: The Department acknowledges Mr. Greenleaf's notation of several utility facilities in the project area. During the project's final design, the Department will closely coordinate the proposed work with local Officials with regards to municipal utilities and with the private utility companies regarding their facilities in the project area. Efforts will be initiated to verify the location of existing facilities, to identify potential areas of conflict and the utility relocations necessary to accomplish the proposed construction, and to accommodate requests for concurrent municipal or private utility improvements.

With regards to the former drive-in theater property, the Department does not envision upgrading the facilities to that parcel as part of the project. Utility upgrades should be accomplished by a prospective developer interested in acquiring and developing the property. However, the Department will coordinate with the Town to include municipally supported utility work, at the Town's expense, in the construction contract. Any property rights or additional right-of-way required for the utility work would be the responsibility of the Town.

With regards to the high-pressure gas facilities within the project limits, the Department will initiate early coordination of the project with Granite State Gas. Unless the gas facilities are located within a utility easement, costs for the relocation of facilities in conflict with the proposed construction are not eligible for reimbursement. The Department will work closely with Granite State Gas to limit the extent of the necessary relocations.

14) Mr. Richard Stern (516 Shattuck Way, Newington) noted that the interim safety improvements at Exit 4 and the proposed expansion of the Turnpike have and will continue to substantially change his property setting and adversely impact his quality of life and property value. He asked that the Department consider purchasing his property, which abuts Tricky's Cove.

Response: The Department is sympathetic to Mr. Stern's concerns. However, Mr. Stern's property is situated approximately 700 feet from the edge of the proposed Turnpike with no physical impacts to the property. Thus the Department does not propose to acquire the property. As part of the project's final design effort, the Department will investigate and consider items such as "quiet pavement" and added landscaping to lessen the project's acoustic and visual effect in Newington.

15) Mr. Francis Bruton, Esq. (representing parcel N031, Cumberland Farms, Newington) stated that the business (Exxon station) would suffer negative impacts with the loss of direct access to the Turnpike. Mr. Bruton acknowledged that direct access from the Turnpike off-ramp would not be possible, in light of the proposed raised median that will be constructed on the exit ramp, and that the proposed connector road and driveway to be constructed behind the business seek to mitigate the negative effect on the business. However, Mr. Bruton requested that a direct access be provided from the site to the Turnpike on-ramp, noting that this access would involve minimal changes to the Preferred Alternative, have good sight lines, and the conflicting traffic approaching the on-ramp would be under signal control at the Shattuck Way intersection.

Response: The Department has reviewed the area and is amenable to Mr. Bruton's request. Both of the existing driveway openings that presently service the property are proposed to be maintained. The present driveway on Nimble Hill Road is proposed to have direct access to and from the Turnpike on-ramp, but be restricted to right turns in and out, as a raised median will be constructed to separate the on- and off-ramp traffic. No direct access from the Turnpike off-ramp to this driveway is proposed. The second driveway from the Exxon Station that presently has direct access to the Turnpike is proposed to be connected to a new local connector roadway that is proposed south of the gas station and will intersect Nimble Hill Road opposite Shattuck Way Extension.

It should be noted that the intersection of Nimble Hill Road and Shattuck Way is not proposed to be signalized as part of the project. Conduit for future traffic signals has been installed at the intersection, as part of the interim safety improvement project at Exit 4, with the intent that traffic signals would be installed should traffic increase in the area and the appropriate signal warrants be met.

16) Ms. Jan MacMillan and Mr. Gordon Smith (parcel D056, 14 Boston Harbor Road, Dover) detailed the encroachments to their property as part of prior improvements to the Exit 6 interchange and the impacts to their quality of life that the proposed

expansion would entail. They noted the following concerns relating to the Preferred Alternative for the project:

a) The proposed increase in elevation of US 4 adjacent to their property would increase noise levels, cause headlights to shine upon their house, would make the highway more prominent, and diminish the property's privacy. They asked that a sound barrier fence of sufficient height be constructed to obscure the view of the highway and help diffuse the traffic noise.
b) An improperly graded ditch along US 4 causes water to pond adjacent to their property. They requested the area be reviewed and the ditch properly graded to carry the runoff away from their property as part of the project.
c) The need for improved maintenance of ditches, culverts, sidewalks, and parking areas that were constructed as part of the Scammell Bridge project.
d) They requested mature (12 feet tall) arborvitae trees be planted to replace any trees that are impacted on their property by the project.
e) They suggest the Department may purchase their property at fair market value.

Response:

a) The Department recognizes the owner's concerns. A detailed noise analysis was conducted for this project in accordance with the Department's Policy and Procedural Guidelines for the Assessment and Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise for Type I Highway Projects and Title 23 Part 772 of the US Code of Federal Regulations. The analysis determined that the existing sound levels do not, and the future levels will not approach, meet, or exceed the Federal Highway Administration's noise abatement criterion. Consequently, a sound wall is not proposed in the location along Ms. MacMillan's and Mr. Smith's property. However, the Department proposes to plant evergreen trees alongside US 4 to shield Ms. MacMillan's and Mr. Smith's property and the pocket neighborhood on Boston Harbor from headlight glare and the increased elevation of US 4. The evergreen trees will over time help to obscure the highway.
b) As part of the project's final design, the Department will closely evaluate the existing drainage in the vicinity of Ms. MacMillan's and Mr. Smith's property and will grade or construct ditches and other drainage appurtenances to minimize the ponding of water adjacent to their property.
c) The Department, as a matter of policy and limited resources, does not maintain sidewalks. The maintenance of sidewalks on the State system is typically deferred to the community. The Department's District Six Office, which is responsible for the maintenance of drainage and other appurtenances to the State highway system, will address and prioritize the maintenance needs in the Scammell Bridge area with respect to the maintenance needs elsewhere in the District Six region.
d) There are no physical impacts proposed to Ms. MacMillan's and Mr. Smith's property. Consequently, the arborvitae trees on their property are not proposed to be impacted.
e) Since no physical impacts are anticipated to Ms. MacMillan's and Mr. Smith's property, the Department does not propose to acquire the property.

17) Ms. Anne Buckley (parcel D016, owner of K9 Kaos, 430 Dover Point Road, Dover) noted that the proposed Turnpike expansion would directly impact her property compromising her ability to operate her kennel business, and the proposed noise barriers will hide the business from passing Turnpike traffic thus eliminating her primary means of advertising. She asked that her business be relocated within the immediate area; possibly to land that would become available as a result of the Turnpike reconstruction.

Mr. Brian Dubreuil (Fast Dogs Realty LLC, owner of parcel D016) detailed the impacts to the business property and asked that the Department consider both the partial and, as an alternative, the complete acquisition of the property.

Response: The Department acknowledges Ms. Buckley's and Mr. Dubreuil's concerns. The Department will develop appraisals for a complete and a partial acquisition to reflect the impacts anticipated as a result of the project. The Department will work with the owners to relocate and re-establish their business in accordance with Department policy and the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real

Property Acquisition Policies Act. The Department will progress the complete acquisition of the property, in addition to the business relocation, should the owners desire.

18) Ms. Gail Pare (Chairman, Newington Historic District Commission) requested more information on the planned disposition of the historic railroad station on Bloody Point, noting that it was mothballed at the start of the Exit 4 interim safety improvement project. Ms. Pare noted that the field office for the prior construction was located near the station, and expressed concern that should the field office for the future Turnpike expansion be located similarly, it could have an adverse impact on the station. She requested the Department treat the sensitive historic area with care.

Response: The Department is presently working with the Town of Newington to develop an agreement and transfer the historic former railroad station building and immediate land surrounding the building on Bloody Point to the Town. The Department does not anticipate locating a field office for the future Turnpike expansion in vicinity of the station. The Department has acquired the former drive-in theater property and anticipates the use of the parcel for the project's staging, field offices, and material and equipment storage during the project's construction.

19) Mr. Anthony McManus (Dover Planning Board) explained that traffic studies completed by the City have shown that congestion in downtown Dover is partly due to traffic avoiding the Dover toll and following Dover Point Road rather than the Turnpike. He recommended that the toll either be eliminated or relocated south of Exit 6 to address this problem.

Mr. and Mrs. John and Rosalie Veinott (23 Roberts Road, Dover) recommended either eliminating the Dover toll or moving the toll to the vicinity of Exit 9 in Somersworth to lessen the congestion on Dover Point Road and throughout downtown Dover.

Ms. Caren Curti Peloso (39 Spur Road, Dover), Mr. Jeff Hollinger (former State Representative, 346 Back Road, Dover), and Mr. David Scott (220 Back Road, Dover) noted excessive traffic using both US Route 4 and Dover Point Road to avoid the Dover toll. They recommended relocating the toll plaza to the vicinity of Exit 9 in Somersworth, consolidating the plaza with the existing Rochester facility, and increasing the toll. In doing so, more traffic would stay on the Turnpike; congestion on US 4 and Dover Point Road would be alleviated; and most of the proposed improvements to Dover Point would become unnecessary.

Mr. David Scott (Ward Three Dover City Councilor, 220 Back Road, Dover) and Mr. John Scruton (99 Sixth Street, Dover) suggested that toll collection at the Dover toll plaza be temporarily halted to determine its effect on traffic patterns and congestion. Both felt that this change alone would solve traffic congestion on Dover Point and allow the delay or elimination of the Dover portion of the proposed Turnpike improvements.

Mr. Raymond Bardwell (199 Spur Road, Dover), Mr. Jerry Lynch (26 Lincoln Street, Dover), and Ms. Eileen Williams (2 Autumn Street, Dover) suggested that toll collection at the Dover toll plaza be temporarily (or permanently) halted to determine its effect on traffic patterns and congestion.

Response: It has been consistently stated and acknowledged throughout the study and public participation process that the Dover toll facility and toll-related issues fall outside the project study area and scope of study. The project's study area was identified and established following the 1998 Route 16 Corridor Protection Study and the 2000 Newington-Dover Feasibility Study by determining that the current and future Turnpike traffic operating conditions north of the toll plaza were satisfactory. In contrast, the section of the Turnpike between Exit 1 and the Dover Toll Plaza operates at a poor level of service, both in the current and future design year. In addition, changes to the Turnpike toll system require State Legislative and Executive

Council approval, and may have revenue impacts. These are state-level issues potentially affecting the entire Turnpike system, not project level matters.

The Department has reviewed the historic traffic data in the area. Since the early 1990s, the data shows an ever-increasing volume of traffic on the Turnpike, while traffic growth on Dover Point Road and US 4 has been relatively flat. This data, along with the regional travel demand projections demonstrate a greater regional use of the Turnpike over time as opposed to a large diversion of traffic to the secondary routes. The travel demand projections indicate that the design year (2025) volume of traffic between Exits 3 and 6 requires the type and scale of Turnpike improvements as reflected in the Preferred Alternative.

The Department has conceptually looked at possible alternative toll plaza locations. Relative to relocating the Dover Toll Plaza further north, the only potentially suitable location is situated north of Exit 9 and south of the Long Hill Road underpass. This section of the Turnpike is largely undeveloped along the west side, however, residential development does exist on the east side. Toll revenue at this location would be considerably lower since traffic north of Exit 9 is roughly 35% lower than the traffic at the Dover toll plaza. Additionally, the construction cost of the toll plaza's relocation is estimated at approximately $10 to $13 million (including the removal of the Exit 6 facility). This location would also be very close to the Rochester toll plaza and shift the noise and perceived toll effects onto a different neighborhood.

Due to the aforementioned reasons, the Department does not propose to relocate or eliminate the Dover Toll Plaza, nor implement a toll test and suspend toll collections.

20) Mr. Bruce Woodruff (Dover City Planner, Advisory Task Force member) and Mr. Raymond Bardwell (199 Spur Road, Dover) recommended that improvements be undertaken at Hilton Park, especially at the existing boat ramp, concurrent with the Turnpike expansion. Mr. Woodruff noted that he does not suggest that the Department fund the improvements, rather the Department should coordinate the work with the appropriate State agencies to have the badly needed improvements completed at the same time as the Turnpike construction. Mr. Bardwell suggested a steeper boat ramp into deeper water, a jetty parallel to the existing ramp, and a dock to secure the boats after launch be provided.

Response: The Department will continue to coordinate with the NH Fish and Game Department (NHF&GD) and Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED) to determine whether improvements to the boating infrastructure at Hilton Park could be accomplished concurrently with the Little Bay Bridge and Turnpike Expansion project.

21) Mr. Mark West (West Environmental, Inc.) and Mr. Vincent Frank (Chairman, Newington Conservation Commission) requested more detailed information on the proposed stormwater management system be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement due to the extent of the project's impacts on wetlands and the amount of impervious surface proposed in proximity to tidal wetlands.

Mr. Justin Richardson, Esq. (Newington Conservation Commission) noted concern with water quality in Little Bay and with the risk of further degradation posed by the proposed project. He recommended that stormwater treatment measures be in place prior to roadway construction, that the Final Environmental Impact Statement provide specific locations for stormwater treatment measures, that treatment be provided adjacent to Little Bay in the vicinity of Exit 4, and that environmental inspectors reporting directly to the NH Department of Environmental Services be considered for the project.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO recommended that the stormwater management plan

incorporate infiltration. They also asked for details of the proposed detention basins and their outfall locations, whether the potential impact of the temperature of the discharged stormwater had been considered, and that the Department coordinate water quality monitoring with the New Hampshire Estuaries Project of the University of New Hampshire.

Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) requested details be provided of the outfall locations for several proposed detention basins and drainage swales and noted that some of the stormwater facilities appear to be located within wetlands. She questioned whether the quality of the stormwater discharged from the treatment structures would further degrade the receiving water bodies and whether the shade created by proposed structures (expanded bridges, noise barriers, overpasses, etc.) would impact wetland systems or habitats.

Response: Additional details regarding the stormwater management system and treatment devices will be provided as the project progresses through the final design stages. At the EIS phase, the general drainage patterns and approximate locations for detention basins are identified. These locations and the estimated sizes of the areas needed are rough approximations and generally do not account for site-specific constraints. The presence of wetlands and other site constraints will be factored into the sizing and final layout of the treatment devices as the areas are refined during the final design process.

The Department has worked with NHDES to develop the stormwater treatment needs and the available methods to assess the potential water quality impacts associated with roadway runoff. The Department has also collaborated with the University of New Hampshire (UNH) Stormwater Center to explore the latest in innovative treatment measures, such as gravel wetlands and infiltration measures that can provide a high level of treatment for the various pollutants associated with highway runoff. As a result of this effort with the University and coordination with NHDES, the most current best management practices and design guidance will be incorporated into the water quality treatment measures. A predictive modeling procedure provided by NHDES will determine appropriate stormwater treatment measures, and will also be used to show that to the extent practicable, the estimated future pollutant loads resulting from the expanded roadway area will not increase over the existing conditions.

With regard to the comments pertaining to the potential for water quality degradation and the need for erosion control planning, review and inspection procedures, the Department will require construction contractors to provide detailed erosion control plans including contingency measures and periodic turbidity monitoring of the site discharge during wet weather events. The Department will also require the contractors provide frequent inspections of construction sites to maintain compliance with permit conditions. Stringent requirements in the final design plans will be incorporated requiring contractors minimize any movement of eroded sediment beyond the work area. These requirements are typically a condition of the Army Corps of Engineers and NHDES Wetlands Bureau permits, as well as part of the 401 Water Quality Certificate that will be required for the project.

The Department will evaluate the potential impacts to wetlands and surface waters that may result from shading effects and will address these potential impacts in the Final EIS.

22) Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO noted that the New Hampshire Estuaries Project presently sponsors extensive water quality monitoring in the Great Bay estuary, including a permanent monitoring site beneath the Little Bay Bridges. They strongly encouraged the Department to closely coordinate with and augment this monitoring effort as part of the project.

Response: The Department will coordinate with the NH Estuaries Project to locate and avoid impacts to the existing monitoring station located between Pier 8 of the Little Bay Bridges and the Dover shoreline during construction.

As nitrogen is the limiting factor in estuarine systems, the Department will mitigate any increases in nitrogen (directly resulting from the runoff from the increased impervious surfaces of the proposed widened pavement) in accordance with NHDES guidance on the Best Management Practices (BMP's) for treatment of nitrogen.

The Department will construct BMPs in accordance with NHDES guidelines and will use predictive modeling procedures provided by NHDES to show to the extent practicable, the estimated future pollutant loads from the roadway area will not increase above existing levels, and to determine appropriate stormwater treatment measures. The Department will coordinate with NHDES, and as practicable will assist with their monitoring efforts in the area.

Prior to construction, the Department will take boring samples and test sediments to assess the presence of toxins in the sediments of Little Bay in the vicinity of proposed pier construction and sheet pile installation. If any toxic material is identified, the Department will address the disposition of these toxic substances in accordance with NHDES regulations and through the USEPA's Remedial General Permit (RGP) guidance.

23) Mr. Bruce Woodruff (Dover City Planner, Advisory Task Force member) expressed support for the advanced implementation of an improved southbound merge condition at Exit 6 in Dover, identified in the DEIS as Dover TSM – Exit 6, Southbound.

Response: The Department recognizes the safety and operational benefits of implementing the Transportation System Management Improvement #2 for the southbound merge condition at Exit 6 in Dover. This improvement would create a traditional merge condition and reduce the vehicle delays and vehicle queuing on both the on-ramp and mainline, as compared to the existing condition. The Department will progress the Dover TSM at Exit 6, Southbound as part of an interim project.

24) Mr. Bruce Woodruff (Dover City Planner, Advisory Task Force member) recommended that additional funding for the proposed shuttle between the Dover train station and the proposed Exit 9 park and ride facility be incorporated into the project. He noted that the current Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) project is under funded by 50%, but is a pertinent element of the local bus alternatives as it provide a critical connection from downtown Dover to the Exit 9 park and ride facility.

Ms. Nora Kelley (348 Dover Point Road, Dover) expressed support for public transportation and the proposed park and ride facilities in Dover, Rochester, and Lee.

Mr. Scott Davidson (Executive Committee, NH Sierra Club – Seacoast Group) expressed concern with the relocation of transit bus service from Downtown Dover to the proposed Exit 9 park and ride facility, noting that downtown Dover residents can now walk or take a local bus to access C&J Trailways intercity bus service without having a need to use a private vehicle. Mr. Davidson recommended that coordinated shuttle service be provided between the Dover Transportation Center and the park and ride facility at Exit 9.

Mr. Steven Wells (Executive Director, COAST) and Mr. Rad Nichols (Manager of Operations & Planning, COAST) expressed support for the inclusion of Bus Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 in the project, but noted concern that the methodologies and assumptions used to project ridership on public transportation were outdated and should be reexamined with more current data. They also expressed doubt that the proposed expansions to the bus service would ever be financially self-supporting or adequately funded by either Federal highway or transit funding, and recommended

that the Department commit to funding the operations of these new bus services at least through the design life of the project (i.e. 2025).

Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO recommended that the project incorporate aggressive transit alternatives and commit to fund and implement those alternatives. They urged the early implementation of all proposed Travel Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation System Management (TSM) measures identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to mitigate existing traffic congestion. They recommended that additional small-scale rail improvements be identified in consultation with NNEPRA to enable future service expansion along the Main Line. They expressed concern with some of the assumptions used in projecting public transportation ridership and noted that the methodologies and assumptions used to project mode choice and ridership on public transportation were outdated and should be reexamined with more current data. They expressed concern that the bus expansions proposed as part of the project, particularly the local fixed-route transit services, would not be sustainable without State funding, and recommended that the Department commit to funding the transit operations through the project's design year of 2025.

Mr. John Scruton (99 Sixth Street, Dover) suggested that Travel Demand Management programs such as paying employees to not drive alone or offering "location-efficient" mortgages that provide incentives for employees to live closer to work be implemented to reduce traffic across the bridges. He suggested that tourism revenue be applied to these efforts.

Mr. John O'Reilly (Chair, Newington Board of Selectmen) and Mr. Denis Hebert (Vice-Chair, Newington Planning Board) recommended that housing be constructed within the Pease International Tradeport as a means of reducing traffic crossing the bridges.

Ms. Eleanor Hendricks (401 Dover Point Road, Dover) recommended that the Lee traffic circle be improved to enhance the viability of NH Route 125 as an alternative route for Turnpike traffic.

Response: The Department acknowledges that the City of Dover has initiated a Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) improvement project entitled "Dover 13509" to connect the downtown area, Dover Transportation Center, and other prominent places of employment with the proposed Exit 9 Park and Ride facility. The Department acknowledges that this connection is an important link in the regional transit system and that the project may be under funded. The Department will continue to advocate for this project and will support the City in pursuit of additional CMAQ funding for the project.

The Department also acknowledges the support for the early implementation of the TDM and TSM elements of the Preferred Alternative and will strive to implement these elements prior to or in the early stages of construction. These TDM elements, which are intended as mitigation for the potential for increased congestion during construction, will provide a more balanced transportation system in the seacoast region and travel opportunities other than single occupant vehicles (SOV). These elements include new park and ride facilities in Rochester, Dover and Lee, expansion of bus and rail service, and support for employer-based measures. Although the suggestion of "location-efficient" mortgages to reduce commuter traffic within the project study area is a novel idea which private lenders in partnerships with municipalities may wish to explore, the Department proposes, as part of the Preferred Alternative, to help fund the seacoast area Transportation Management Association (TMA), known as Seacoast Commuter Options, for the duration of the Turnpike's construction or a maximum five-year period to work with and encourage employers to promote employee travel by means other than SOV's. In addition to area-wide ride-sharing and guarantee-ride-home programs, Seacoast Commuter Options is educating area employers and employees about the availability of employee-paid, pre-tax transportation benefits and employer-paid transportation benefits programs as incentives to not driving alone.

With respect to the suggestion that housing be constructed at Pease as a means to help reduce travel across the bridges, the Department acknowledges that mixed use developments offer opportunities to reduce daily vehicular traffic by combining trips and/or by substituting walking, bicycling and transit/trolley service for commuting and other travel purposes (e.g., shopping, social, recreational). At the Pease Tradeport, the generation of daily vehicular traffic has been reduced as a result of the implementation of transit service, employer-based strategies to reduce SOVs, the development of ancillary commercial activities (such as banking, convenience stores and restaurants) and the provision of pedestrian (sidewalk) and bicycle system connectivity. Since transit service within the study area and at the Tradeport will be expanded as part of the Preferred Alternative, additional reductions in vehicular traffic generated at the Tradeport can be expected. However, since current zoning at the Tradeport does not allow residential use, further reductions in daily vehicular traffic resulting from some employees residing at the Tradeport appears infeasible.

With respect to transit service, the methodology and assumptions which form the basis of estimating future transit ridership will be updated for presentation in the FEIS and will include recent ridership data, recent modeling enhancements and updated costs for parking, fuel and travel time.

Developing and maintaining a sustainable funding source for the preservation and improvement of the area's transportation system, transit included, is a challenge that transcends the Newington-Dover, Spaulding Turnpike improvement project. The need for sustainable funding has been recognized as an issue by both the Department during development of the New Hampshire Transportation Business Plan and by the State Legislature. The Department has proposed a maximum five-year commitment to fund the transit-related elements of the Preferred Alternative as mitigating elements to the potential for increased levels of congestion during construction and overall dependency on SOV travel in the region.

The limited capacity along NH 125 between Exit 12 of the Spaulding Turnpike in Rochester and the Lee traffic circle diminishes the viability of NH 125 as a suitable alternative route to the Spaulding Turnpike for many weekday peak period travelers, independent of traffic operations at the Lee traffic circle. In addition, commuters from the Rochester area traveling south to Portsmouth and communities along the I-95 corridor would not travel US 4 and NH 125 as an alternative route to the Turnpike.

25) Ms. Jennifer DeLong (Assistant State Coordinator, National Flood Insurance Program) noted that alterations proposed within special flood hazard areas should be coordinated with Newington and Dover to ensure that the project meets the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements, since both communities participate in the NFIP. She also noted that if the Department determines that the proposed construction would have a negligible impact upon flood dynamics, further coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency would likely be unnecessary.

Response: Floodplain impacts were evaluated during development of the project and are documented in the EIS. The Preferred Alternative would affect a total of 3.9 acre-feet of 100-year floodplain volume. The majority of this impact (2.7 acre-feet) is associated with the expansion of the bridge piers.

The floodplain impacts are considered inconsequential in the context of the tremendous volume of Little Bay and will have a negligible effect on the base flood elevations in the area. Likewise, changes to the hydraulic characteristics in the channel would have negligible effects on tidal flooding.

A hydrodynamic model was built to analyze the potential effects of the project on the estuary and provided information on tidal heights throughout the estuary. The model compared the existing condition with the Preferred Alternative and predicted that the

pier extensions may change tidal maxima on the order of 0.1 to 0.2 inches, depending on the tidal condition and the location in the estuary. Similarly, current velocities and directions are expected to change only minimally. Thus, effects on local and regional flooding resulting from the additional fill in the Little Bay are considered to be negligible.

The Department has and will continue to coordinate the project with both Dover and Newington and will seek to further minimize, to the extent practicable, floodplain impacts during the project's final design.

26) Mr. James Yeames (409 Dover Point Road, Dover) noted that he was not notified of the Public Hearing and asked that a transcript of the meeting be provided him.

Response: The Department is required by law (RSA 230:17 & 230:18) to provide notice of the Public Hearing by certified mail to owners of property with the potential to be physically impacted by the proposed project. Although residents on the east side of Dover Point Road are not proposed to physically be impacted by the project, mailings were forwarded to the owners of Dover Point Road properties to advise them of the project's Public Hearing. In total over 600 mailings were sent to property owners and property interest holders, as well as state, local, regional agencies and interested individuals advising of the Hearing. Although notice to Mr. Yeames was inadvertently sent to the wrong address, Mr. Yeames did take advantage of the public comment period and submitted correspondence that is included in the Hearing transcript. A copy of the Public Hearing transcript is posted on the project's website titled www.newington-dover.com, and Mr. Yeames has been made aware of the posting.

27) Ms. Rosalie Veinott (23 Roberts Road, Dover) reported that a section of right-of-way fence between the Turnpike and Spur Road, in the vicinity of the toll plaza, was down and in need of repair.

Response: The section of fence has been repaired. The Department appreciates being made aware of the fallen section of fence.

28) Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO expressed concern that the computer visualizations created for the project likely satisfy Federal requirements, but were inadequate to satisfactorily convey to the public the scope of the proposed improvements. They suggested that additional visualizations be prepared of sufficient size and clarity to provide the communities with a better understanding of the relationship of the project to the surrounding area.

Ms. Nora Kelly (348 Dover Point Road, Dover) suggested that more computer animations of the proposed improvements be prepared.

Response: During the project's final design, additional coordination and meetings with the Advisory Task Force, as well as communities and neighborhoods directly affected by the project will be held to further discuss the project and better explain the project details as they are more fully developed. Additional visualizations to help illustrate the proposed improvements will be developed, if necessary, and presented at that time.

29) Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO recommended that the Department work proactively with tidal power companies to study and potentially facilitate, in the design of the bridges, the future placement of tidal power generation equipment on the new bridge or within the bridge area.

Response: The Department is amenable to consider studies and designs of tidal power generation equipment and systems that are developed by the tidal power companies. The Department's concern resides with any potential degradation and/or deterioration of the Little Bay Bridges and General Sullivan Bridge should turbines or equipment be directly attached to or located in close proximity to the bridges.

30) Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO noted their general concurrence that this project would not induce substantial growth. However, they expressed concern that the induced growth projected by the modeling proved to be relatively negligible. They noted anecdotal evidence suggests that the congestion at the bridges has been influencing development decisions for years. They concurred with the use of the REMI model for making socioeconomic predictions, but expressed concern with the manner in which the countywide model results (particularly the Rockingham County data) were interpolated to represent the project study area, and suggested this methodology be reviewed. They also noted concern regarding the assumptions used in estimating the percentage of wetlands within the socio-economic study area and potential wetland impacts that could be caused by the induced growth. Finally, they recommended that a Community Technical Assistance Program, more limited in scope than that implemented by the I-93 expansion project, be incorporated into this project. They noted the Spaulding Turnpike corridor would benefit from a program that focused on assisting communities in two specific ways: local implementation of the *Land Conservation Plan for New Hampshire's Coastal Watersheds (August 2006)* and local assistance to improve opportunities for workforce housing in the region.

Response: The Department acknowledges the Seacoast MPO's assertion that the project would not induce substantial growth. This is substantiated by the fact that growth has and continues to occur in the communities north of the Little Bay Bridges without regard for the congestion levels within the project area. While the delay associated with traffic congestion in the project area is certainly a factor in determining regional economic trends, the results of the Regional Economic Model, Inc. (REMI) suggest that other factors also influence growth in the area. Individuals and businesses make decisions based upon a complex set of factors related to economic benefit and quality of life such as housing costs, health care, environmental characteristics, safety/security, standard of living, shelter and social interaction. The EIS contains information about property values and local tax rates which are also critical factors used by people and businesses to evaluate options about how and where to locate. Thus, while anecdotal evidence may suggest that the chronic congestion on the bridges plays a role in people's economic decisions, traffic congestion is one of a number of factors, the balance of which likely outweighs the issue of congestion within the project area in determining regional growth patterns. It is also important to note that nearly all of the growth in the study area is expected to occur regardless of whether the Turnpike is improved or not, in response to other influences (such as the cost of housing) involving overall quality of life and continued economic prosperity found in New Hampshire. Further, it is not clear whether the additional growth that has been identified by the REMI model, and the associated land conversion, is growth that otherwise would not occur, or growth that would simply occur later in time if the project were not completed. A more thorough discussion of these factors (particularly housing costs) will be included in the Final EIS.

With regard to the treatment of Rockingham County data, it is important to note that the REMI model was used to estimate population growth on a county basis. Due to how model input data is collected by various Federal and State agencies, the county level is the smallest unit for measuring possible social and economic impacts. The model does not allow for analysis of population, employment and housing below the county level. A simple proportional approach was therefore used to compare and analyze potential economic impacts for the Rockingham County portion of the Socio-economic Study Area – which is a standard and accepted statistical practice for this type of analysis. However, given the concerns expressed by the Seacoast MPO and others, the sections of the Final EIS that discuss secondary growth issues will be updated to consider the effects of allocating 100% of the secondary growth to the

Rockingham County communities within the Socio-economic Study Area. Also, the methodology used to allocate the projected future growth and corresponding potential wetland impacts will be re-assessed and data updated in the Final EIS.

Due to the relatively minor level of secondary growth related to the project, the Department does not propose to incorporate a Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) for the communities in the area. The CTAP program established for the I-93 corridor has developed several practical resource booklets to help other communities statewide proactively plan and manage growth in their communities. These booklets, as well as, other pertinent material are available on the Department's website at http://www.rebuildingi93.com/content/ctap.

31) Mr. Scott Myers (Mayor, City of Dover), expressed support for the proposed mitigation package for the project noting the City Council and Mayor fully support the proposed mitigation elements.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott (Executive Director, Rockingham Planning Commission) and Ms. Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director, Strafford Regional Planning Commission) on behalf of the Seacoast MPO expressed support for the wetland mitigation package proposed for the project as it contained a mix of preservation and restoration opportunities. They also expressed support for the proposed conservation of the Tuttle Farm as part of the project's mitigation package.

Mr. William Tuttle III (151 Dover Point Road, Dover) and Mr. Kevin McEneaney (President, Strafford Rivers Conservancy) endorsed the preservation of the Tuttle Farm asking that the effort be expedited.

Ms. Anna Boudreau (Executive Director, Strafford Rivers Conservancy) expressed support for the Dover elements of the wetland mitigation package comprising preservation of the Tuttle Farm and land in the Blackwater Brook area.

Ms. Wendy Scribner (130 Henry Law Avenue, Dover) expressed support for the Dover elements of the wetland mitigation package, particularly funding for the preservation of the Tuttle Farm and land in the Blackwater Brook area. Ms. Scriber noted that the Tuttle Farm has a prominent presence in the community and its preservation will protect a rapidly disappearing farming tradition and the scenic views provided by the farm. She also noted that the Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society, and NH Natural Heritage Bureau identified that Blackwater Brook area as one of three watersheds within the Cocheco River watershed that was of exceptional habitat of regional significance.

Ms. Marcia Colbath (Chair, City of Dover Open Lands Committee) and Ms. Joyce Elkovarti (112 Bellamy Woods, Dover) endorsed the proposed preservation of the Tuttle Farm and land in the Blackwater Brook area, requesting that the efforts be expedited in light of the constant threat of development.

Mr. John Pike (Dean and Director, University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension) endorsed the effort to permanently preserve the 120-acre Tuttle Farm noting the farm as historic, the oldest family farm in America, and an irreplaceable asset.

Ms. Dea Brickner-Wood (Great Bay Coordinator, Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership) supported the effort to permanently preserve the 120-acre Tuttle Farm noting the property contains a diverse habitat of tidal and non-tidal wetlands, streams, and prime agricultural soils. The property's permanent protection from further development will be a positive contribution to the overall water quality of the adjacent streams, rivers, and the Great Bay, as well as protect a regional historic and scenic resource.

Mr. Christopher Snow (10 Mast Road Extension, Dover), Ms. Barbara Rushmore (191 Spur Road, Dover) expressed support for the preservation of the Tuttle Farm.

Mr. Michael Garrepy (Long Hill Realty Investments LLC) expressed interest in discussing the sale of the Tsimekles property, which is located in the Blackwater Brook area and has been identified for potential preservation as an element of the project's mitigation package.

Response: The Department acknowledges and appreciates the community's support for the mitigation package presented for the project. In response to the property owner's request, the Department, in partnership with the City of Dover, has expedited the acquisition of a conservation easement on the Tuttle Farmstead to permanently preserve the 120-acre farm. The preservation was consummated on January 29th, 2007 with the conservation easements executed and property rights transferred to the City, the Department, and Strafford Rivers Conservancy.

The Department is working closely with the City to permanently protect the Tsimekles property, a 105-acre parcel located in the Blackwater Brook watershed that is undergoing the threat of development. Should an agreement with the City and developer to acquire the parcel or large portion thereof not be reached, the DEIS identified several other parcels in the Blackwater Brook area that are deemed worthy of preservation and permanent protection, which the Department will then pursue to fulfill the mitigation requirements of the project in Dover.

The Department will also continue to coordinate the restoration and preservation elements, as identified in the DEIS, with Pease, the Town of Newington, and the property owners of the mitigation parcels to finalize the mitigation requirements of the project in Newington.

32) Mr. Mark West (West Environmental, Inc.) and Mr. Vincent Frank (Chairman, Newington Conservation Commission) presented a preliminary review of the wetland application and compensation mitigation package for the portion of the project in Newington. They suggested additional information concerning temporary impacts to wetlands, as well as impacts within the tidal buffer zone are needed. They generally agreed with the components of the recommended mitigation package in Newington cautioning that a risk assessment regarding potential contamination needs to be completed prior to pursuing stream and wetland restoration work of Railway Brook. They also noted that restoration of segment A is more attractive than segment B, since Restoration Alternative A is further removed from the runway at the Pease Tradeport. They noted general support for the preservation of the Watson property and preservation of land in the Knight Brook area as elements of the wetland mitigation package, but urged the former drive-in theater site be eliminated from further consideration as a candidate site based on its lower ecological value. Lastly, they requested additional information demonstrating that the NHDES compensatory mitigation ratios are met to compensate for the amount of wetlands impacted by the project.

Mr. John O'Reilly (Chair, Newington Board of Selectmen) and Mr. Denis Hebert (Vice-Chair, Newington Planning Board) concurred with the support of the Newington Conservation Commission for the proposed stream restoration and recommended the elimination of the drive-in theater from further consideration as a mitigation site. They added that the name Railway Brook is not recognized and is locally known as either Flagstone's Ditch or Flagstone's Brook.

Response: The Department agrees that it is appropriate to identify impacts to the tidal buffer zone. This information has been developed and will be reported in the Final EIS and submitted as an addendum to the NHDES Wetlands Permit application.

The Department also agrees that temporary impacts to wetland resources must be identified. It is expected that all wetland impacts will be contained within the footprint as shown on the project wetland plans. However, additional temporary impacts may be required. These impacts are typically a function of construction sequencing and procedures, and will be determined during the final design or construction phase. As is standard practice for projects such as this, the Department will continue to track actual wetland impacts during final design and construction of

the project and will submit those updated impacts to the regulatory agencies for their review.

Additional work is being conducted to provide a conceptual design for the restoration of Railway Brook, and Alternative A is the preferred restoration option based on public comment and coordination with various resource agencies. As stated in the DEIS, a conservation easement on the Watson property is also a preferred element of the mitigation package in Newington. Should agreement not be reached on the Watson property, then the Department will pursue the preservation of two of the three parcels (or 60 to 70 acres) identified for preservation in the Knight Brook area. With regard to the former Drive-in Theater property, the Department will not pursue the former drive-in for mitigation.

The name "Railway Brook" derives from maps of the area developed by the US Air Force. Prior to the development of the Pease Air Force Base (AFB) in the 1950s, the watercourse identified as "Railway Brook" was a branch of Pickering Brook which flowed north to join the main stem of Pickering Brook, then east to discharge into the Piscataqua River. Topographic maps from that era show that Flagstone Brook was a relatively short stream located entirely north of Nimble Hill Road and was located in a different watershed which discharged to Tricky's Cove. With development of the AFB, the former branch of Pickering Brook was diverted to Flagstone Brook. The informal name "Railway Brook" is used in the DEIS and related documents to help distinguish the impacted stream reach located between Arboretum Drive and Nimble Hill Road from the true Flagstone Brook north of Nimble Hill Road.

33) Mr. Raymond Bardwell (199 Spur Road, Dover) noted that the proposed road reconfigurations in Dover would change the access to the Division of Motor Vehicles office on Boston Harbor Road. He asked that the intersection designs make accommodations for truck access to the facility, particularly on US 4 westbound at Spur Road.

Response: The Exit 6 proposed improvements at the US 4/Spur Road, Spur Road/local connector, and local connector/Boston Harbor Road intersections will be designed to safely and efficiently accommodate heavy commercial vehicles including tractor-trailer trucks.

34) Mr. Scott DeCost (General Manager, Fox Run Mall and Crossings at Fox Run) noted that the proposed elimination of Exit 2 would change traffic patterns on Fox Run Road directing much more traffic to its intersection with Woodbury Avenue. He expressed concern with the intersection's ability to handle the added traffic and asked that suitable improvements to the intersection be considered. He suggested a traffic signal also be considered on Woodbury Avenue at the Wal-Mart driveway to allow full access under signal control, which would alleviate some of the increase in traffic on Fox Run Road.

Response: The Seacoast Regional Travel Demand Model was used to model the existing and future traffic changes and assist in evaluating the improvement alternatives for the project. The changes in traffic patterns between Exits 1, 2 and 3 are expected to be more complex under the Preferred Alternative than simply diverting traffic from Exit 2 to Exit 3. For example, creating the Woodbury Avenue extension from Exit 3 to Arboretum Drive is anticipated to divert a substantial volume of traffic related to the Pease Tradeport that is currently using Exit 1 to travel north to use Exit 3. With this anticipated change in travel pattern, Exit 1 will have more available capacity and will become a more attractive route for some motorists destined to Gosling Road and Woodbury Avenue. Motorists currently using Exit 2 will divert to both Exits 1 and 3 once the Preferred Alternative is constructed.

The Department has reviewed the intersection of Woodbury Avenue and Fox Run Road. In order to accommodate the projected 2025 peak hour traffic demands at the signalized intersection, the improvements associated with the Preferred Alternative include modifying the existing right-turn lane on Woodbury Avenue eastbound to

accommodate both through traffic and right-turns. This modification will substantially increase the volume of traffic that can be processed by the existing traffic signal. The intersection is anticipated to operate acceptably at LOS C or better throughout the design year (2025) with the proposed improvements. The analysis has been updated to include vehicular trips associated with a proposed 7,135 square foot restaurant and 4,800 square feet of ancillary retail space to be located off Fox Run Road. The results from the updated analysis indicate that the Woodbury Avenue / Fox Run Road intersection will continue to operate acceptably at LOS C through the design year with the additional commercial development on Fox Run Road. As such, an additional traffic signal and break in the median on Woodbury Avenue at the Wal-Mart driveway are unnecessary.

35) Mr. Scott DeCost (General Manager, Fox Run Mall and Crossings at Fox Run) expressed concern that the elimination of Exit 2 and the related guide signs indicating "Fox Run Road" would remove the existing guidance provided for tourist related traffic to the mall. He requested suitable directional signs be placed at Exit 3 to guide motorists to the mall. He also requested consideration to allow the selective trimming or clearing of trees within the Turnpike right-of-way that have grown to obscure the mall's pylon sign.

Response: The Department is presently investigating the benefits of the Attraction Logo Program, similar to the Tourist Attraction Sign program enacted in the State of Massachusetts, where signs for specific, high volume attractions are installed on the freeway or Turnpike system to provide directional information to the traveling public. Should the Attraction Logo Program be implemented statewide, signage for the Fox Run Mall could be considered under the program.

As an element of the project's construction, the Department does not anticipate the need to undertake tree clearing or trimming in the area of the mall's pylon sign. As a matter of practice, the Department does not permit the clearing or trimming of trees that are located within the State right-of-way for the benefit of exposing signs located on private property.

36) Mr. David Scott (Ward Three Dover City Councilor, 220 Back Road, Dover) expressed concern for the residents that own land which will be impacted by the project and expressed hope that property acquired through the eminent domain process will be appraised to determine its fair market value and will be fully compensated.

Response: Any land or property that is impacted by the project will be acquired at fair market value based on an appraisal of the property's highest and best use in accordance with State and Federal law.

25 June 07
Date

Charles P. O'Leary, Jr.
Commissioner
N.H. Department of Transportation

S:\Newington\11238\MISC\ROTC11238.doc